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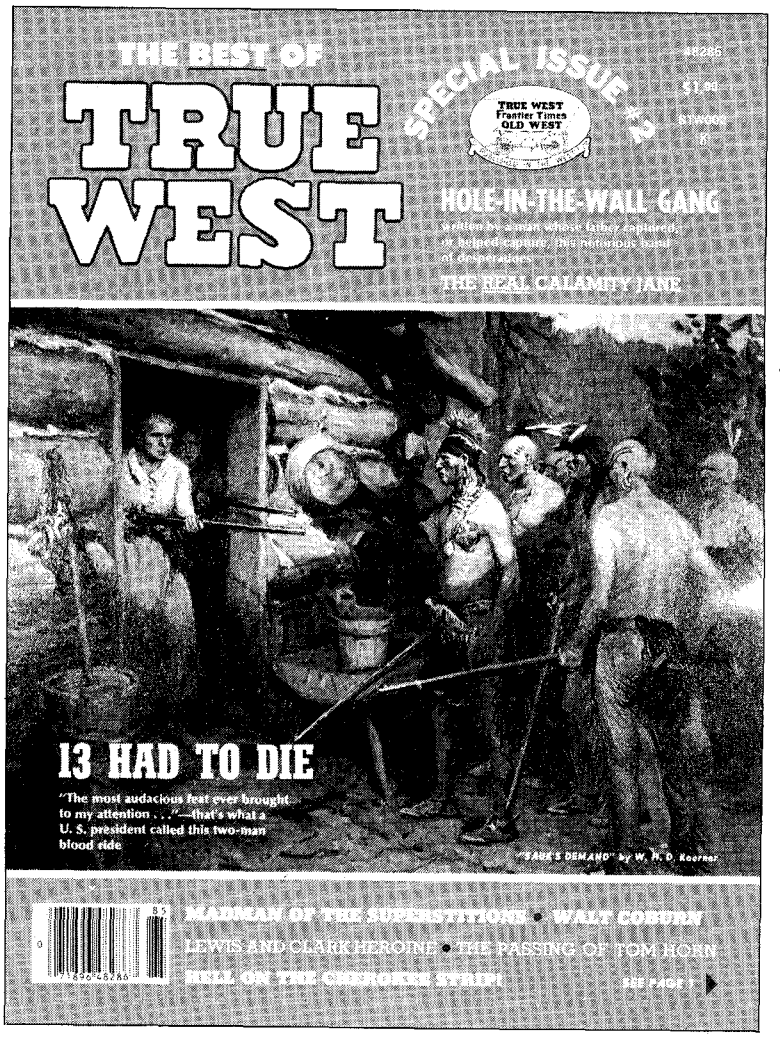

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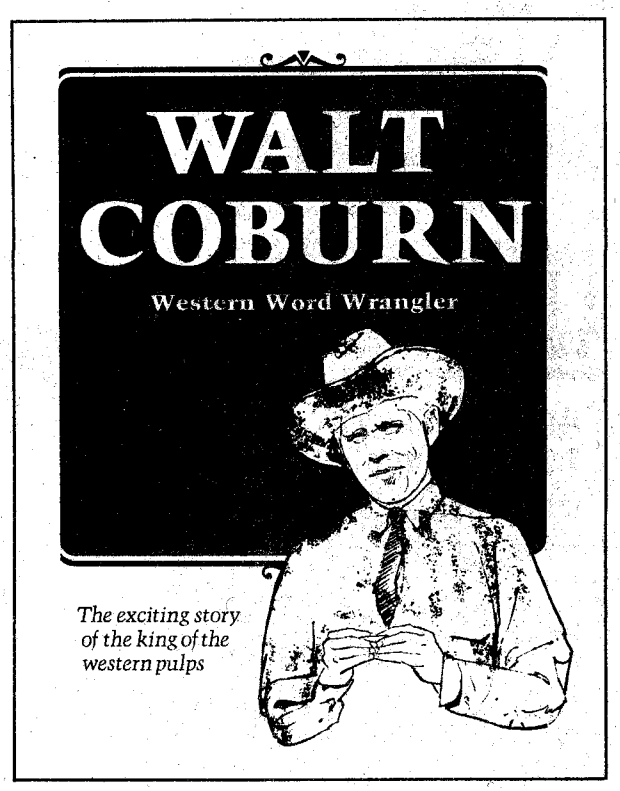

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True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of The Real West!

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Truly Western

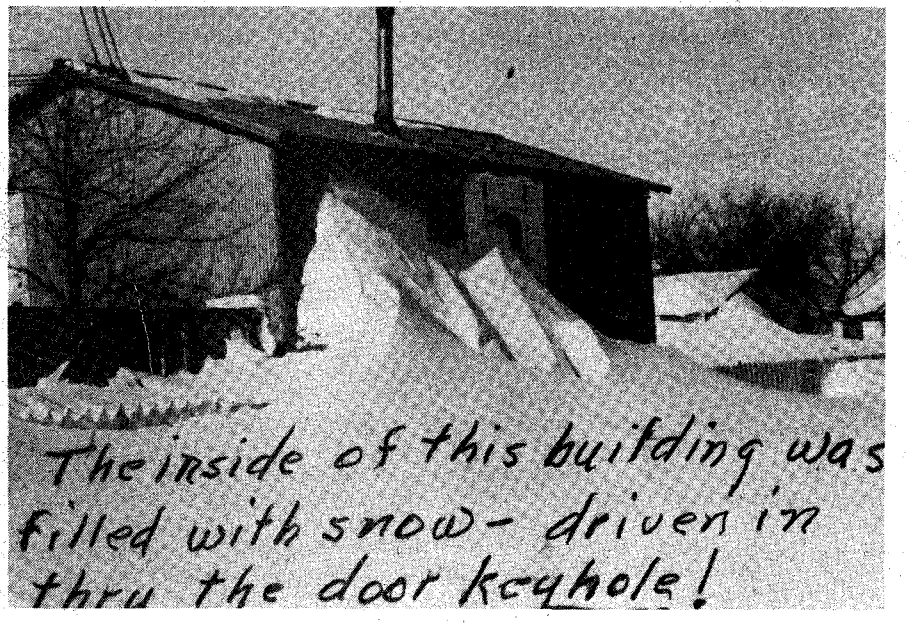
ging, working with snow removal equipment, California Highway Department—but "Snowbound" was my "Masters Degree."—Howard Steiner, California

The Echols Story

I just finished reading the February *True West* from front to back. It was good all the way.

I think Lee Echols' story on Ed Echols

(Continued on page 58)



Above, standing on top of the wires! Below, locating the road.

King of the Winters

In the February *True West* I read with much interest "The Great Blizzard of 1899."

Now, would you like my observations of the Great Blizzard of 1948-49 that covered western Nebraska, Wyoming, South Dakota, Southern Idaho and Colorado? I was a kind of "free lance" observer, representing the Fifth Army Engineers, on loan from the Office of Chief of Engineers. I maintained liaison with General Pick's Headquarters (Missouri River Division, C. E. Omaha) and was permanently located at the Granite City, Illinois Engineer Depot—the supply source for the equipment sent to "Operation Snowbound." I traveled over most of the area by commercial air and bus, by private plane, truck, freight trains—or I hitchhiked. I wrote my own travel vouchers and travel orders. My Number One priority was to uphold the reputation of the Corps of Engineers and the Army by rendering advice and service, and investigating failures in utilization, operation and maintenance of equipment.

Finally, I made the general conference meeting and gave my official report with the cost estimate for restoring Army Engineer Equipment to "Troop Issuable Condition" (more than $800,000).

Prior to "Snowbound" I had lots of winter experiences — North Dakota (West) 1907-1918—winter tractor log-

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Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient! If possible, please type your query; or if handwritten, print or write clearly, especially names, dates, and places—and most of all, please be brief. In accord with the content of our magazines and purpose of this service since its beginning, preference is given writers whose trails have grown dim out West: lost ancestors and relatives who were sheriffs, pioneers, Forty-niners, muleskinners, cowboys, Indians and Indian fighters, and so on. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

Holkcome

My father, John Macbride Holkcome, was part Cherokee Indian. He was born January 30, 1868 near Springfield, Missouri. His father was killed in the War three months before he was born.

Father ran away from home when he was eight years old and when he returned, at age thirteen, his mother had passed away.

Some of his relatives were John and Mollie MacDonald and I have been told that he had a twin sister, Susan. Grandmother Holkcome owned a farm near Old Springfield. I've heard that the farm was where the courthouse stands in Old Springfield.

John Holkcome came to Texas in 1895 and married my mother at Cleburne, Texas. If anyone knows anything about my father I would appreciate hearing from them.—Mrs. Anita Hudgins, 1506 Garza Street, Dallas, Texas 75216

Carman-Beezley

I am seeking information about my great-grandparents, George Edward Carman and Mollie Smith Carman. He was born 1855, place unknown, and died at Van Horn, Texas 1916. He had two sisters. He drove wagons and hauled salt around Hope, New Mexico and West Texas. His picture is in a store window in Mertzon, Texas along with some of the other old-timers from that area.

He married Mollie Smith, place and date unknown. They had seven children. Mollie is believed to have had four sisters. They lived for a while at Lookout, New Mexico, later Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Also, any information about Thomas Jefferson Beezley, my grandfather, would be appreciated. He was married to Mary Ella Carman, my grandmother, until her death in 1898 at Sherwood, Texas. Then he disappeared and was never heard from again.—Mrs. Mae Pritchett, 1249 N. Adoline, Fresno, California 93728

Voltaire

I am seeking information about my maternal grandparents. They both died before I was born and very little is known about them except for vital statistics and a few scraps of family legend.

My grandfather's name was Sidney Henry Voltaire. He was born May, 1846 possibly in Louisville, Kentucky, possibly in France. He died in Oregon in 1929. My grandmother, Emma Miller Robinson, was born in Springfield, Ohio December, 1866 and died in Winnemucca, Nevada in 1913. We know she was married previously to a Mr. Robinson and may have had two sons by him. She and Sidney Voltaire were married in New Mexico in 1899. They had five children, most of them born in California or Nevada. Sidney was reputed to have been married twice prior to this union and to have sired twenty-one children in all.

My mother vaguely remembered having met a half-brother named Lesley Voltaire while still a child in Nevada. He may have been traveling with a circus at the time.

We know nothing at all about Sidney's family except that he had a sister named Belle Riley, possibly in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was a fairly literate man for his time and was rather fond of the bottle. He earned his living as a musician and piano tuner, never staying long in one place. We would like to know more about these people.—D. L. Hollyfield, 2434 Crooked Finger Rd., N. E., Scotts Mills, Oregon 97375

Pemberton

Lee Pemberton married Ann Jackson and moved from Arkansas to Spanish Fort, Texas. He was killed there either in January or June 1896. I believe he had brothers; one may have been named John. I would appreciate any information about the family of Lee Pemberton and will answer all letters.—Claud Pemberton Briscoe, 967 Laurel Way, Rio Vista, California 94571

Hardee-Esslestyn

Has anyone any knowledge of Lottie B. (Hardee) Esslestyn? She was born January 3, 1881 in Siam, Iowa; she was married about 1916 probably in Helena, Montana where she worked as a secretary, possibly for the governor. After her husband died she was a resident of Basin, Wyoming.

When her sister Amanda (Hardee) Zane died she was the only survivor of the children of Oliver Perry Hardee, (an early settler of Shell, Wyoming, who was the first white child born in Page County, Iowa). It is believed she made her home in the last years with a nephew, Walter R. Clifton. Anyone having any knowledge of this woman please write.—Goldie Shaffer, 2600 Boonville Road, Ukiah, California 95482

Bernett

I would like very much to find out about Joanne Bernett or any of her children. I am her brother. Joanne was born in Shreveport, Louisiana and was adopted, with the assistance of a Baptist preacher named Williamson, by an older couple in Lily, Louisiana around 1933. She has blue eyes and blond hair. Any information will be appreciated.—L. C. Becker, 210 W. Palace Street, Hobbs, New Mexico 88240

Simon

I am attempting to trace my father's family. His name was Charles Henry Simon, known as Carl or Chuck. He originated from Valley City, North Dakota and came to California about 1927. I have heard that his parents originally came from Germany.

Through the Soldiers and Sailors and Marines book of North Dakota, World War I, I have found that Dad was in the 164th Infantry Regiment from July, 1917 to February, 1919. He gave his birthdate as September 10, 1900, but on my birth certificate, April 9, 1928, he listed his age at twenty-five. I think he was fourteen when he went into service in 1917. He was therefore only fifteen when he returned from France in February, 1919. I would appreciate any information from anyone that may have known the family in and around 1914-1918.—James H. Simon, 906 Navajo Street, Barstow, California 92311

Taylor

I will be most grateful if anyone can give me information on my father, John Luther Taylor. He was born in Bonham, Texas around 1890-1896. I don't know the names of his parents. I recall a sister, Ester Baird, living in Bristow, Oklahoma, and two brothers named Pat and Ernest.

John moved to Utah in 1915 or 1916. He married in about 1920 and he and his first wife had two children before she died. He married again in 1926 and they had ten children. Will appreciate any information from your readers.—Edna Taylor Cecala, 17 Rose Circle, Murray, Utah 84107

Watson

I am seeking information about the Watsons of Logan and Giles Counties, Tennessee. These are the relatives of my father, Robert P. Watson, who passed away August 15, 1951: Will, Coffee, Bud, Veach, Felix, and Camble. Anyone who knows the whereabouts of any of them, please write me.—J. M. (Pete) Watson, Rt. 1, Box 123A, Thorndale, Texas 76577

Cator-Donaldson

Bessie Donaldson Cator was born to William Newton and Josephine Spearman Donaldson in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, November 20, 1872. When Bessie was eleven years old the family moved to Hardesty, a communty in Oklahoma in what then was called "No Man's Land."

Bessie married Leslie C. Cator on April 18, 1899 in Malock, Hansford County, Texas. They were the fourth couple married in that county. Their home, the Cator Ranch, was five miles above old Hansford on the Palo Duro River. They had seven children. Bessie also had two brothers: John Donaldson, now living in

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Vulcan, Alberta, Canada (he had a son named George); one brother of Woodburn, Oregon; and one sister, Cordelia Chappell (my father's mother), now deceased.

The Cator family had a large part in building Hansford County. Two of Leslie Cator's brothers, James H. and Bob (J. L.), were early buffalo hunters. The day of the Adobe Walls Indian fight the brothers had killed fifty-seven buffaloes around the old lake in what is now the city of Amarillo. While they were killing buffalo a short way away, hundreds were being killed in the Indian fight. Unaware that there was a battle, the boys came upon the scene two days later. This sight caused them to take off in a hurry to their camp on the Palo Duro River, just north of where Morse is now located. Here they maintained for years a camp and a stage station on the old Dodge City-Tascosa route.

Later Leslie and Bert O., his brother, came to Hansford County. Among the records in the county courthouse we found out that James H. Cator was the first county judge (1899-1900), Bob (J. L.) Cator was the first county commissioner, Bert was the first county sheriff, and Bessie was the first county assessor. Any information regarding the Cator or Donaldson families would be appreciated. —Hazel O. Tracey, 14803 S.E. 45th Pl., Bellevue, Washington 98006

Nygren

I am seeking information on anyone related to a Charles Nygren, who was witness to his brother John Nygren's wedding on May 3, 1905 in Spokane, Washington. Charles and John had a sister, Amelia, who lived in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Charles had a son and daughter who would be my cousins, both under seventy years of age. I will appreciate any information.—Mrs. L. Huisenfeldt, 2926 Plum Creek Lane, Apt. 35, Houston, Texas 77087

Pate

Thomas Pate and his wife, name unknown, were probably married in Georgia, but they were living in Butler County, Alabama in 1830. Before 1840, both parents were deceased and with Elijah Pate in Butler County in 1840, besides his wife and children were three older children, presumed to be two sisters and a brother. There seems to have been nine Pate children; Elijah, probably the oldest, remained in Alabama where he died before 1850; a girl, probably named Anna, who also remained in Alabama; a girl who married Joseph Loftin; Emma C. who married James Hardcastle; a girl who married Alexander Fowler; Susan who married Eli Hardcastle; Joseph; a girl who married George Worcester; and Sarah who married Cornelius Smith.

It seems that after 1850 all these Pates except Elijah and Anna migrated to Texas. They came first to Milam County and James Hardcastle's family and Joseph Pate's family remained there. Joseph was in the Confederate army, it seems, and likely was killed in the war. In 1870 his three children, Lawrence H., Benjamin

(Continued on page 60)

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MILT BRYAN'S ADVENTURES ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL

Author's Note: The remarkable story of Milton E. Bryan is based on Bryan's own manuscript written with pencil in 1885. The manuscript was lent to me by James Stuppy of Kansas City, Missouri. Stuppy is Bryan's great-great-great grandson. The year 1978 marks the 150th anniversary of Bryan's Santa Fe Trail adventures.

By DAVID DARY
Photos & Map Courtesy Author

ON THE FIRST day of September 1828, Milt Bryan and twenty other men slowly rode out of the village of Santa Fe. They were going home. Bryan, an adventuresome youth of twenty-one, and the other traders were returning to Missouri after a successful trading venture in what was then part of Mexico. Their caravan consisted of 150 horses and mules herded loosely behind four horse-drawn wagons carrying supplies and several thousand dollars in Mexican silver coins, their trading profit. John Means, a seasoned plainsman, was captain.

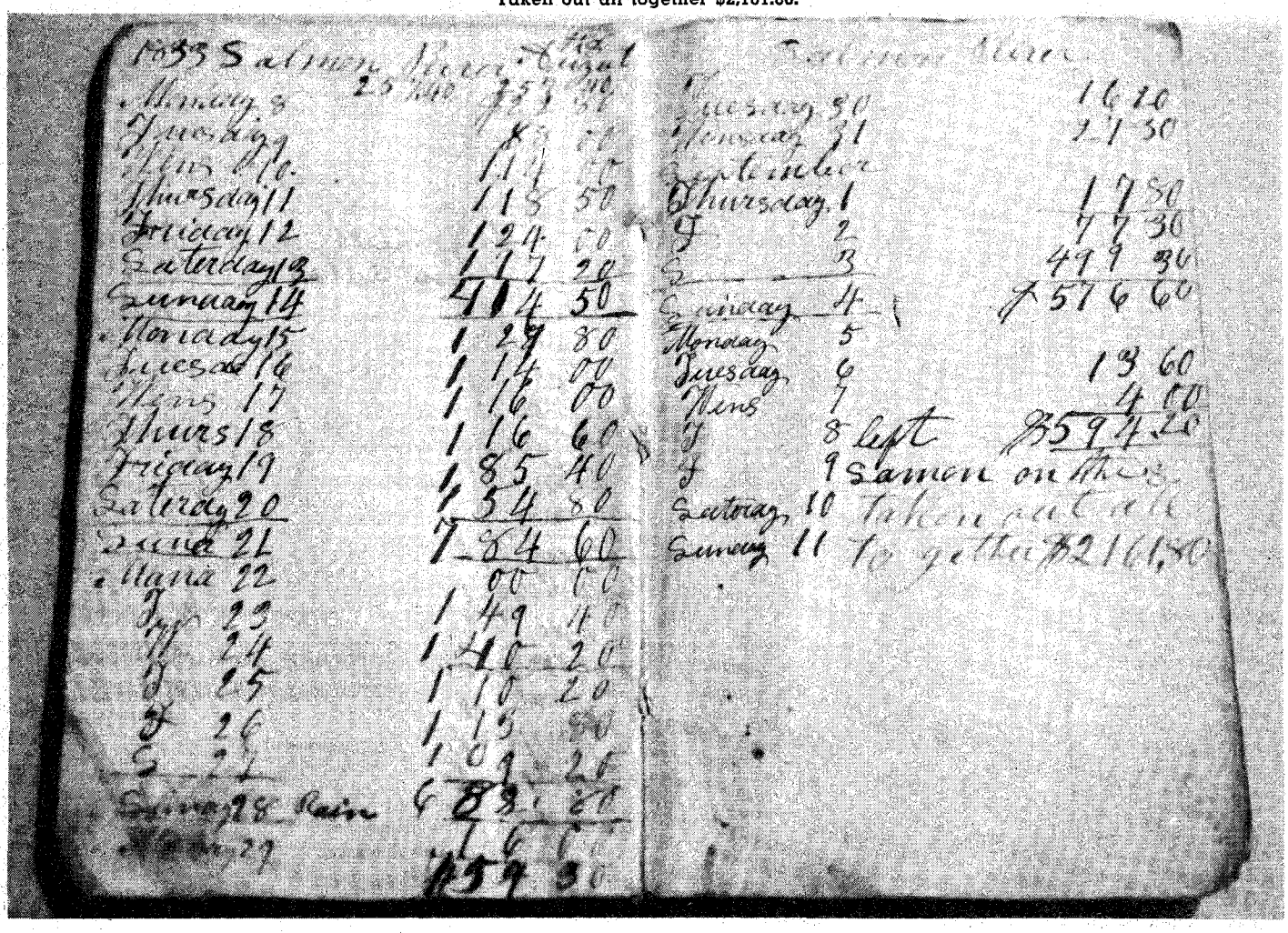
Only seven years earlier, William Becknell of Missouri had wandered into Santa Fe with a pack train of Indian trade goods. The next year, 1822, Becknell returned with goods intended for civilian trade and thereby established regular commerce between Missouri and Mexican territory over what became known as the Santa Fe Trail.

Hearing wonderful stories of how profitable such trading was, Bryan left his home in Boone County, Missouri in the spring of 1828, joined up with a part at Independence, purchased some trad goods and crossed the nearly eight hun dred miles of unsettled country betwee there and Santa Fe. The trip was un eventful except for two days withou water and a meeting with a band of In dians near the Cimarron River in wha is today the Oklahoma Panhandle.

Now, weeks later, Milt Bryan and th others were returning home. For three o four days nothing unusual happened then the caravan reached upper Cimarro Springs where they intended to mak camp for the night. As they went over rise, they found themselves in a larg camp of Comanches.

"We could neither turn back nor tur to either side, on account of the moun tainous condition of the country," Brya

Two pages from Milton Bryan's gold field record book, covering August through early September of 1853, and listing the dollar value of gold discovered on the Salmon River in what is now the state of Idaho. At the bottom of the right hand page is written: "Taken out all together $2,161.80."



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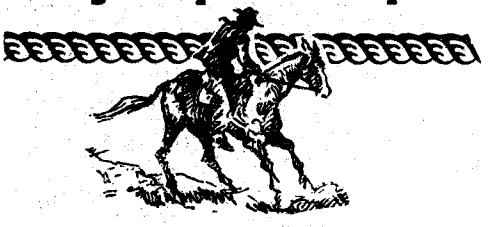
The Plains were empty and lonesome in 1828—but lucky were the lonesome! Any company that showed up was likely to be wearing warpaint and looking for a paleface scalp!



recalled. "We realized too late that we were in a trap from which it would require both herculean and heroic efforts to escape."

There was only one road open—and it lay right through the Indian camp. With guns in readiness, the traders moved forward. An Indian chief met them with smiles of welcome. "You must stay with us tonight," said the chief in Spanish, adding, "Our young men will guard your stock, and we have plenty of buffalo meat."

Captain Means turned down the Indian's invitation and gave a signal for the party to keep rolling.

"Captain Means, Thomas Ellison and myself were a little behind the wagons and horses, on horseback, when they seized our bridle reins, and immediately began firing upon us."

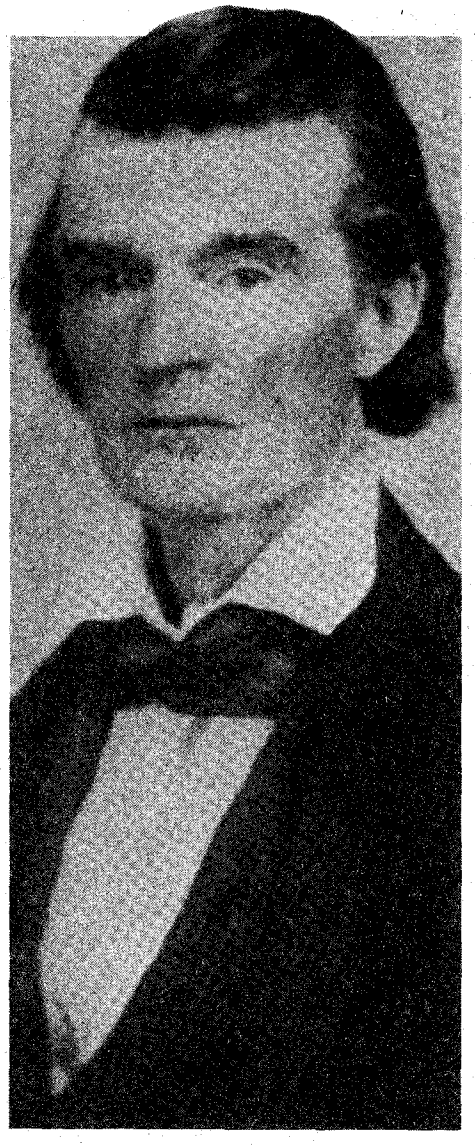
TOM ELLISON and Milt Bryan spurred their horses and got away, but Captain Means was hit and fell to the ground dead. As Bryan and the others made a race for their lives, many Indians jumped on their ponies and gave chase. "We succeeded in fighting them off until we got about a half mile from their camp. Since darkness was setting in, we decided to go into camp for the night. We tied our old gray bell mare to a stake, and whenever any of us could do so, we would go and jingle the bell, thereby keeping our horses from stampeding. We coralled our wagons for better protection and were kept busy all night resisting onslaughts from the Indians," wrote Bryan.

At daybreak the traders moved out on the trail only to suffer a new attack. Throughout the day Indians, atop their ponies, charged into the caravan.

"We made but five miles of progress. It was a continuous fight, and we were harassed so greatly it was very difficult for some of us to keep from falling into their hands."

Normally a caravan could make fifteen or more miles a day on the trail, but the next four days were a repeat of the first. Bryan described the harassment. "They would surround us and then stop, as if renewing their strength, and they kept it up until we were almost exhausted from fatigue and loss of sleep.

But on the morning of the sixth day, as the traders moved onto the broad plains, there was no sign of trouble. Some of the men felt sure the Indians had turned back. Then at mid-day, in greater numbers than ever and yelling loudly, they swept down on the caravan. Before Bryan and the others knew what was happening, the Indians had stampeded the loose horses and mules—all 150 of them.



Instinctively William Y. Hitt galloped after the animals and was about to turn a few head back toward the wagons when several Indians surrounded him. Hitt fought for his freedom from horseback and made his escape, but he was hurt. Bryan wrote that Hitt was "wounded in sixteen places. He was shot, tomahawked and speared."

Soon a ball from one of the traders' rifles found its mark. An Indian fell from his pony. When the others saw one of ther number shot down, they withdrew for a time. The lull gave the white men time to regroup, corral their wagons, and build a breastwork with harnesses and saddles. They had barely finished the job when the Indians returned.

CHARGE AFTER CHARGE was made at the small circle of four wagons—a make-shift fort on the plains. Fortunately, the wagons contained a good supply of ammunition.

The Indians continued their attack into the night, keeping up the pressure until about two hours after dark when the moon went down. Then suddenly there was a strange quiet; for a minute or two not a man spoke.

All of them realized they had to decide on a course of action, so soon they began to talk quietly. Bryan remembered, "It was apparent to everyone that but two alternatives were before us. Should we resolve to die where we were or endeavor to escape in the gloom that surrounded us? It was a desperate situation, but our little band looked the matter square in the face, and after a council of war had been held, we resolved to save ourselves, if possible.

Above, Milton Bryan as he appeared about the time of the Civil War, exact date unknown. Bryan was born December 31, 1806. Below, Bryan's home at Wathena, Kansas. He spent the last years of his life in this house.

Photos Above and Below Courtesy Mrs. Frances Rost, St. Joseph, Missouri.

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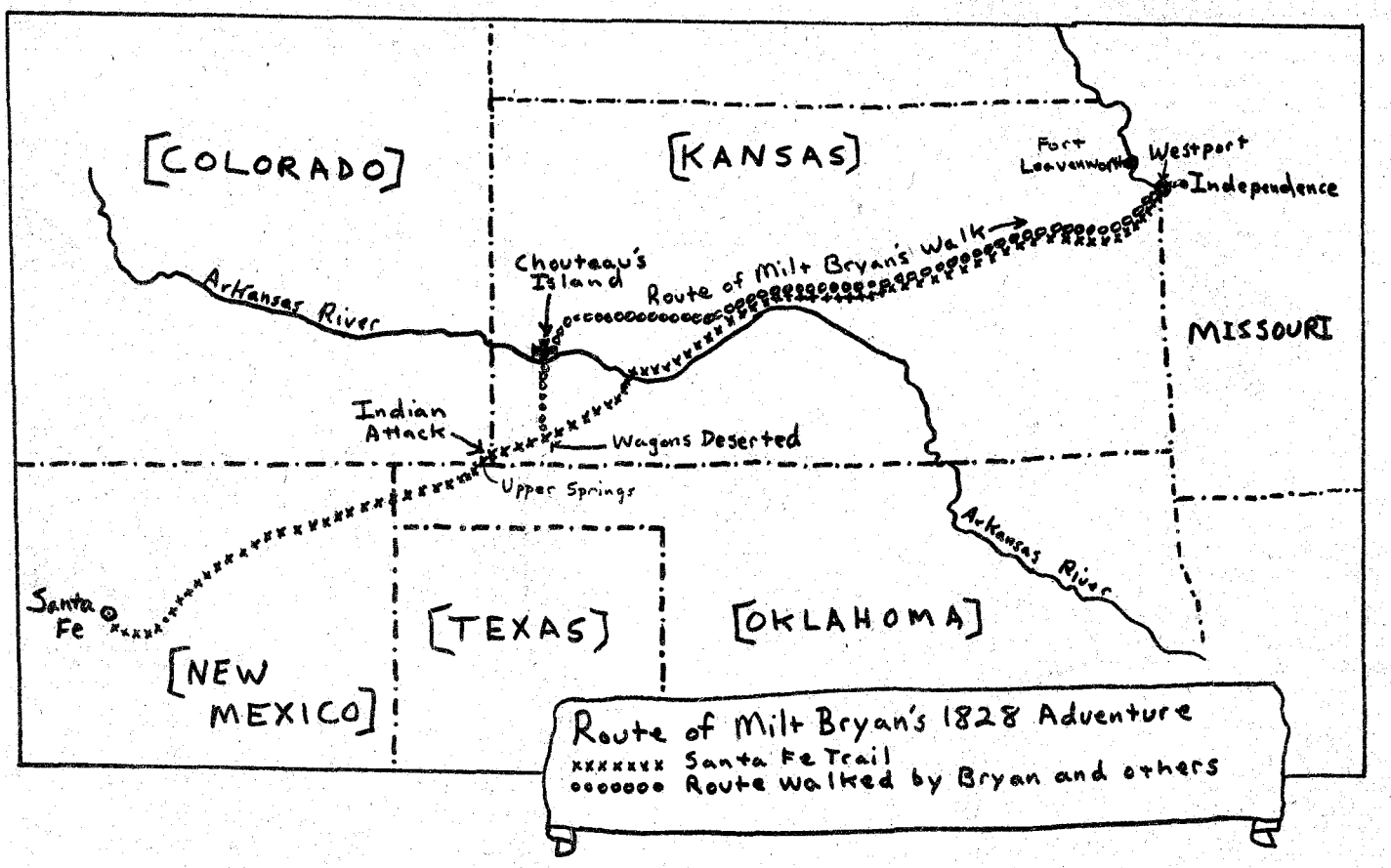


"In order to do so, it was necessary to leave our wagons, together with a large amount of silver coin in them, as we were unable to carry all of the latter in our flight. We packed up as much of it as we could carry, and bidding our wagons and hard-earned wealth a reluctant farewell, we stepped out into the darkness like spectres and hurried away from the scene of death.

"We knew that five hundred miles lay between us and the first settlement; but we were young, life was sweet, and we knew that there were loved ones at home who would look for our return with anxious hearts."

Just where their makeshift camp was located or how much silver was left behind is unknown. Bryan makes no reference in his manuscript to any attempt to recover the Mexican coin left behind in the wagons. One could assume that the Indians overran the camp the following morning and carried off the silver along with other things left behind. If they didn't, some of it may still be glinting in the starlight on the Santa Fe Trail.

Assuming that the Indians, after discovering the traders were gone, would head east to overtake them on the most direct route, the white men headed north as rapidly as they could walk. Stopping only for brief rests, they walked all the next day and part of the next night until they reached the Arkansas River.

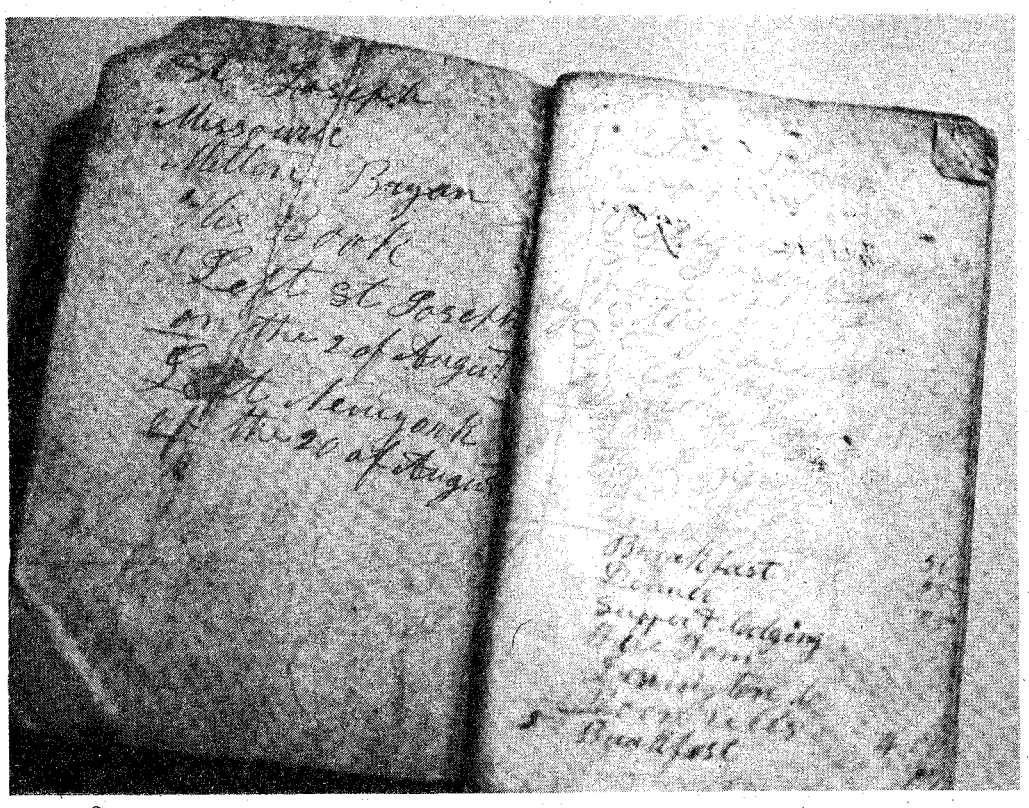
By then they were growing weak. They had eaten nothing but some prickly pears. On the bank of the Arkansas River they slept. At daybreak, gambling that they were out of hearing of the Indians, they shot a buffalo and an antelope.

"We ate without salt or bread, but no meal ever did or ever has tasted better to me than that one. Oh! but it was a feast for us all," Bryan wrote.

The traders then decided on their next

(Continued on page 20)

Milton Bryan labeled it "His Book" on the inside cover of his 1853 gold field record book.



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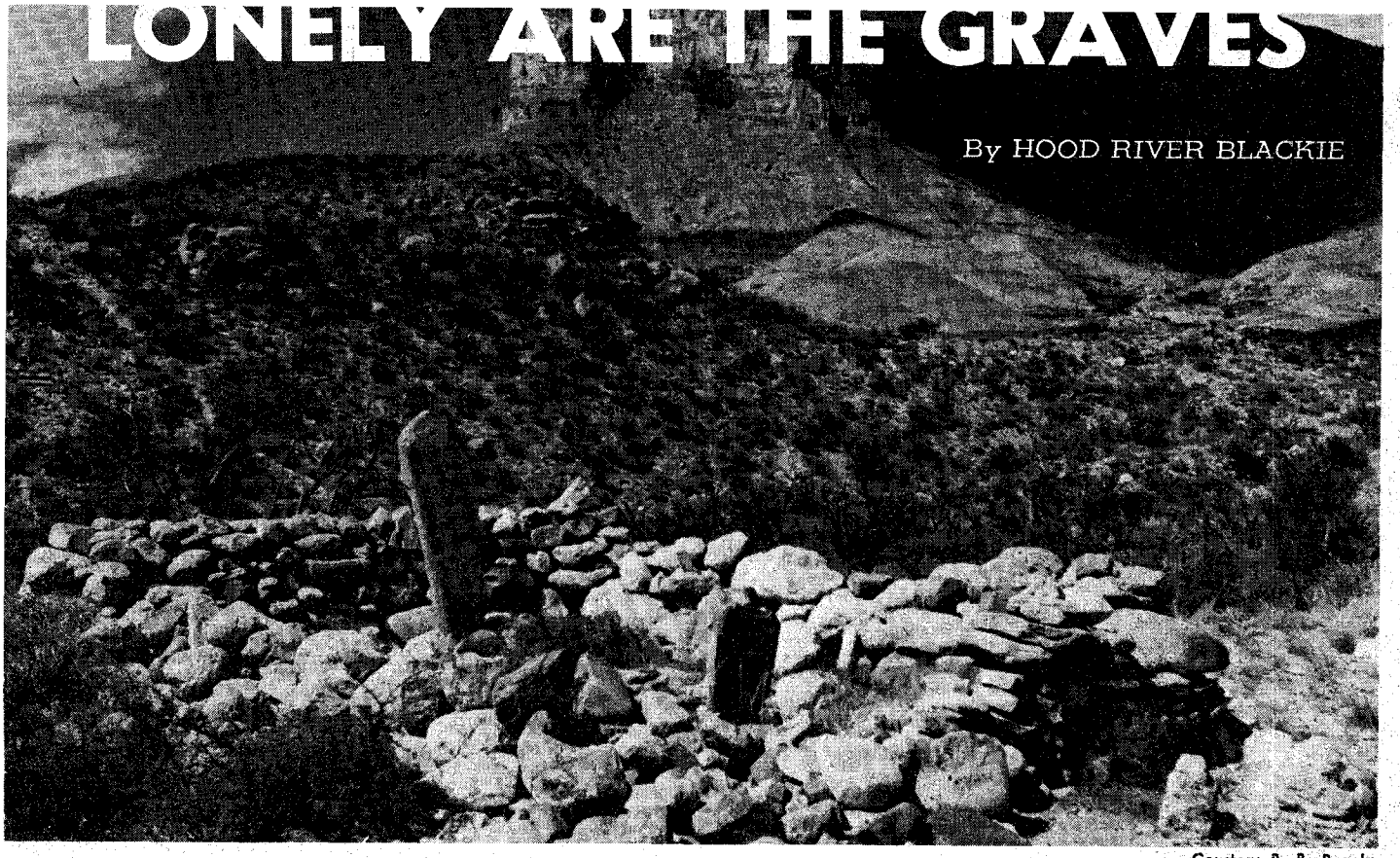
LONELY ARE THE GRAVES

By HOOD RIVER BLACKIE



Courtesy R. B. Rugely

El Capitan looms in the distance like the headstone of Polancio's grave. The marker reads: "Jose Maria Polancio—Guide, Killed Feb. 1855, By Indians."

ANYBODY who has done much rambling in the back country of the West has at some time or another probably stumbled onto a lone grave. Perhaps just a pile of rocks, perhaps with a head marker of some kind, but obviously the last resting place of some unfortunate human.

Many years ago when the West was young no one thought anything of planting a pal right where he died, or at least nearby. To try and get an undertaker or a minister was simply out of the question, partly because of distance from town, and partly because it was just the custom to bury the dead at once unless the poor devil had passed on in or near a town.

Shorty Harris, the famous Death Valley prospector, lies beside his old pal Jim Dayton right on the floor of Death Valley itself. Johnny Ringo is buried just about where he was found dead under a tree, and the old cattle trails from Texas to the trail-end towns in Kansas are strewn with the graves of cowboys killed in stampedes, gunfights, and by disease.

Many a resident of Texas and Kansas and Oklahoma has a grave of some long-forgotten cowhand on their property, perhaps right in the yard. There was no way to mark a lot of these lonely resting places except with a couple of sticks tied to form a cross, which wouldn't last long anyway, so they will never be known.

I remember the first time I saw a lone grave out in the back country. Me and old Tex Medders had ridden our mules up out of Bouse Wash about twenty-five miles east of Parker, Arizona, and headed south for Quartzsite through a notch in the mountain range that runs north and south just west of the town of Bouse.

About five miles out, we rode up a small alluvial fan into the notch itself and within a quarter-mile it became a dry wash with banks six feet high. Now, no experienced man will ever camp in a dry wash in the desert as a rain miles away could dump a six-foot wall of water on you and there wouldn't be a drop of rain that you could see, just a flash flood roaring down on you in the night.

Anyway, to get on with the story, we were hungry and ready to camp so we searched until we found a cattle trail winding up out of the wash. We rode up it and onto a bench about thirty yards wide where we dismounted and made camp.

Tex started to put together some grub while I took a small hatchet and went on the scout for firewood. I hadn't gone fifty yards when I walked right up on a mound which was obviously a grave. It was covered with rocks and had a big one at the uphill end of it, which I figured marked the head. In the last few years I've seen lots of phony graves put together by pranksters to fool tourists, but in them days there wasn't many tourists, at least off the beaten path, and when you found a grave out like that it was real.

I've got to add here that I did get fooled once when I was prospecting in the Schell Creek Range in northeast Nevada. I had stumbled on the remains of an old shack, and a grave was under a small tree beside it. I thought, "Well, here lies some poor devil," and wondered who it could have been, only to learn from a passing sheepherder the next day that it was the grave of a much beloved sheepdog which a Basque had buried. I guess it was either a mighty big dog or its owner only knew how to dig graves human size.

ANYWAY, back to that first grave, I went and got Tex and showed it to him, hoping that since he had been in that country as early as 1906 he might know the story behind it. He looked all around the area but said he'd had no idea the grave was there though he had passed a few yards from it several times.

I was pretty young in them days and thought every grave I saw out like that was some gunfighter's or a victim of foul play.

Only one lonely back-country grave I've ever seen had any words on it, and that was across the border about eighty

(Continued on page 48)

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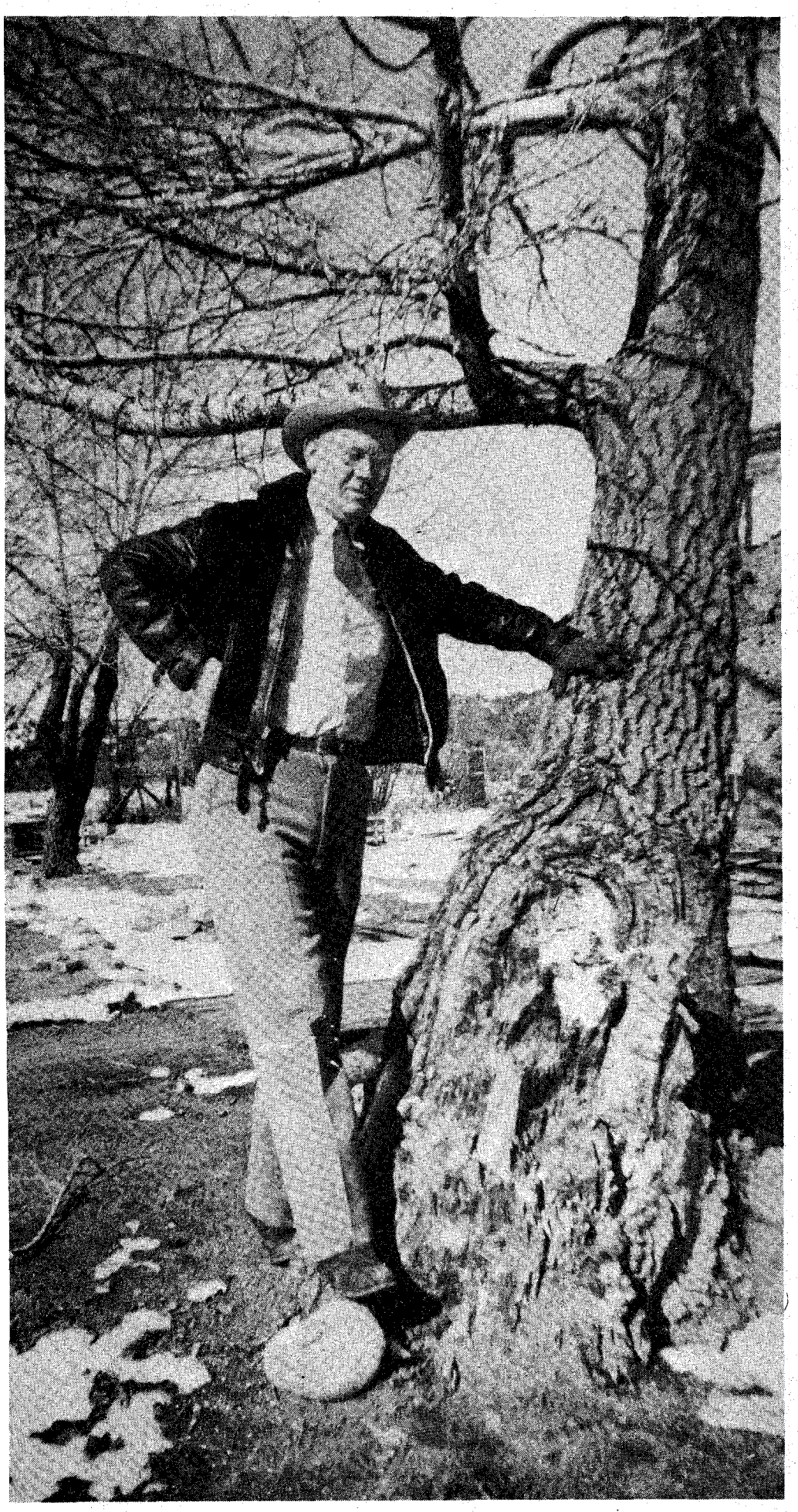

THE

By BUNDY AVANT
as told to
ARTHUR CLEMENTS

Photos Courtesy Author

At left, Bundy Avant, taken at Santa Fe During World War II.

MY FATHER, L. F. Avant, faced life with a calm confidence that any man who would work hard, and would turn his hand to any work available, could always make a living. So in 1894 when a prolonged drouth in Texas cost him his little herd of cattle and his crops, he simply turned his remaining cattle over to the mercantile company which had been carrying him, and struck out for Roswell, New Mexico.

He already had a wife and four children; Viola; Leslie; Howard; and me, Bundy Avant, then one year old. In the years following, Julia was born in a little adobe house about three miles southeast of Roswell, and Marshal and Fred were born at Capitan in 1900 and 1906 respectively.

In 1894 Roswell had a few businesses scattered along the main street, a couple of grocery stores, two or three saloons, the Joyce-Pruitt Hardware, several livery stables and the usual Chinese restaurants and laundries found in all towns along the railroad. It was a busy town mainly because it was the first place reached by the hordes of people coming from the East in wagons, by stagecoach and on the train. Some had only a few household goods while others brought their stock with them. Stock could range from a few chickens in a coop tied to the tailgate of a wagon, and a milk cow led behind that, to herds of hundreds of cattle or sheep. Roswell was also the place where cowboys came to blow off steam after months on the roundup, or to look for a job.

At the head of North Spring River on the day we arrived, my father spotted a fair-sized lake and decided to set up camp there. His stock consisted only of a pair of ponies and a yoke of oxen. Early next morning he walked back into Roswell to look for a job. He stood a moment on a corner, deciding where to begin, when a man came by and asked him if he were looking for work. My father assured him that he was indeed.

The man wanted a well dug at his house, but my father had no tools. So both men proceeded to the Joyce-Pruitt Hardware Store where they obtained a shovel and grubbing hoe. After getting my father started, the man was leaving

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BUNDY AVANT STORY — PART I

—New Mexico in the days when a thin population was intent on bettering itself and each man could devise his own method for "gettin' while gettin' was good"

:o go to his own job and said, "When you get through with the well, I'll be in that ittle adobe building down the block."

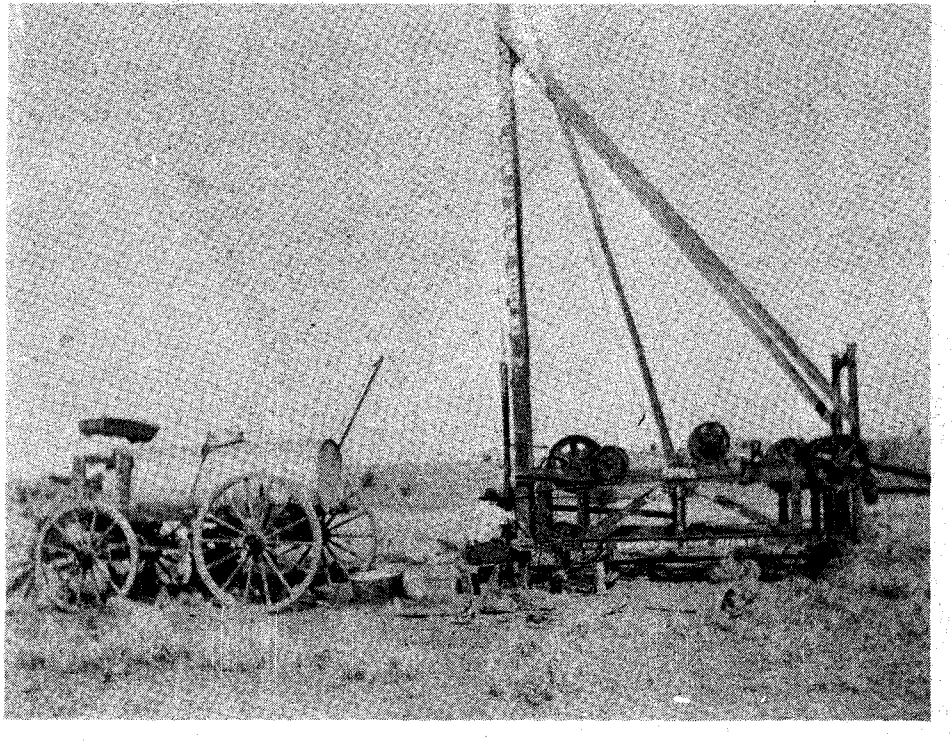
Father fell to work with a will, as he always did, and at a depth of eight feet found all the water needed for house use. In fact, he could no longer bail the water out enough to dig any deeper. Muddy, wet and tired, he climbed out of the well and started for the adobe building. It turned out to be the First National Bank and the man who hired him was E. A. Cahoon, its owner. Cahoon was pleased with the well, and asked how much he owed. Father said he had no idea what the prevailing wage was, and whatever that was would be all right with him.

Cahoon laid out two ten-dollar gold pieces, and Father protested it was too much. Cahoon argued that he would have to buy new clothes because the ones he was wearing were ruined. So it was agreed, and when Father asked what to do with the tools they had bought, Cahoon told him to keep them. This was the way a lifelong friendship began.

After digging the well, Father took two or three days to scout out the area and talk with the men around town. Again, it was Cahoon who approached him with a proposition to farm a tract of eighty acres he owned three miles southeast of town. Cahoon helped Father secure the farming tools he would need, and for the next three years we farmed this acreage, first in sugar beets then in alfalfa.

The alfalfa hay was not baled but stacked loose. My father usually bought Cahoon's part of the hay and fed it to cattle he bought from other farmers. They had a system of measuring the width, length and height of a stack and arriving at the tonnage. Little by little, my father got a nice bunch of cattle started again.

Drilling on the K6 Ranch near Hillsboro, New Mexico in 1917.



THIS LAND was almost surrounded by land owned by J. P. White, Sr. I think we became acquainted with Mr. White through my grandfather, Captain E. B. Simonds; they were both big Masons. Mr. White owned the LE Ranch east of the Pecos River as well as the Yellowhouse outfit near where Littlefield, Texas now stands. Although old John Chisum had moved away by that time, his ranch house still stood, nine miles south of Roswell on South Spring River. My father made friends easily and over the years he came to know all of the ranchers who did business in Roswell to the Indian Reservation to north of the Capitan Mountains.

There was the Flying H owned by S. S. Ward located on the Feliz Creek. Farther out in the foothills the Sutherland and Blanchard brothers had ranches. Around the foothills of the Capitan Mountains lived the Pepper families—Enoch, Arthur, Charlie and Stanley. There was Frank Purcella and his sons, Lewis, Henry, Andrew and Frank. Martin Chavez owned Picacho and all the land around it, but through bad investments and bad judgment he lost it all and died broke in Santa Fe. Leopoldo Pacheco did much better. He also owned land and thousands of sheep around the foothills, and that land is still in the family.

J. H. Clements came to the area from Texas in 1898. With him were his wife, daughter Amanda, and her three children Sally, Joe and George. Clements settled in the low hills adjoining the Indian reservation on the east side of the Sacramento Mountains. Joe and George, then twelve and six respectively, helped herd their grandfather's sheep from the time they arrived. When they finally got to start to school the other kids ridiculed them and called them sheepherders.

The little boys made a vow to each other that they would make a million dollars as sheep ranchers just to prove that it was as profitable and respectable to raise sheep as to raise cattle. They already knew that sheep had some advantage over cattle. In the summer when permanent water was scarce, herders watched the land for summer showers. In this country you can see a shower

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falling miles away, and if they saw one up to ten miles away they would at once start their sheep in that direction. Many times, after being the first to arrive where the grass had been washed clean and the potholes filled with fresh water, the herders would have to face cowmen who would ride up and cuss them for always usurping the best range.

Since cattle grazed scattered out it wasn't practical to try to gather them and drive them to these waterholes; the sheep had the advantage. It is to the credit of Joe and George that they did keep the vow they made as children; they both made their million before they died.

Some ranchers combined the two types of stock. Jud McKnight, who is now over ninety, drove a band of sheep from Oklahoma in the 1890s, and tells of holding a little ceremony when he crossed the line with his sheep. From this beginning he went on to become one of the foremost ranchers in the state. With his son-in-law and grandsons, he is still interested in the sheep business.

AT THE END of our first three years near Roswell, my father was again getting established as a cattleman. One fall he and a friend, Tom Woods, went to the foothills of the Capitans to haul some winter wood. While there they heard a rumor of a big mining boom in Colora, a little settlement near Capitan. Without checking any further, they each took a horse from the team and with only a quilt for a saddle, rode twenty miles into Colora.

Gold fever was running high then, but though it was true there was a boom all around the mountains, it was coal that had been found, and already five thousand men were there, besides the soldiers at Fort Stanton.

Thoroughly disgusted, they started back to their wagons, but after a mile or so my father reined up. "Hell, Tom," he said, "I just remembered the store there had a sign out asking for bids on beef. And beef is what I've got."

So they went back and Father put in a bid of eight cents a pound. He got the contract and we moved to Capitan and he furnished them beef for three years. He sold all of his steers and bought more from other people.

Father took other jobs on the side. One was a contract cutting ties for the railroad, and timber for bracing the mines. The timber was cut high on the mountains then sent down a chute to where wagons could load it and haul it to where it was needed. Then he contracted to build a portion of the grade for the railroad between Belen and Willard.

About this time the Governor of New Mexico, Miguel Otero, got Father to help organize the New Mexico mounted patrol. (At Santa Fe he was the first man on the list and the last man to go when the patrol was disbanded in 1912.) Because of this extra claim on his time, Father decided to give up the road contract.

He sold his teams and equipment to Jack Mulligan, who agreed to pay him for them as the work progressed. Father was busy and didn't get back until after the work was finished. When he did, Mulligan was gone and was never seen again in those parts.

Father went to Santa Fe for the inauguration ceremonies of the Rangers and allowed me to go with him. We were twenty-eight days going and coming. We took a packhorse to carry our camping equipment. I remember that the ingredients for making bread were already mixed in a flour sack. We simply made a little depression in the mouth of the flour sack, poured in a little water, and when the dough was stiff, it was stuck on the end of a green stick and held over the fire until it cooked. We cooked salt pork the same way.

Back home in Capitan, I finally started school when I was eight in a one-room schoolhouse about four miles northwest of town. It had a dirt floor, and logs for seats. My sister Julia and I would hurry to be the first ones there so we could sit on the big end of the log. It became very uncomfortable sitting on the little end all day. We carried our lunches and drinking water.

In summer I often played with Morgan Riley at the Grays' place nearby. Morgan was the Grays' grandson. There was an old character called Colonel D.J.M.A. Jewett, who had sort of taken up with the Gray family.

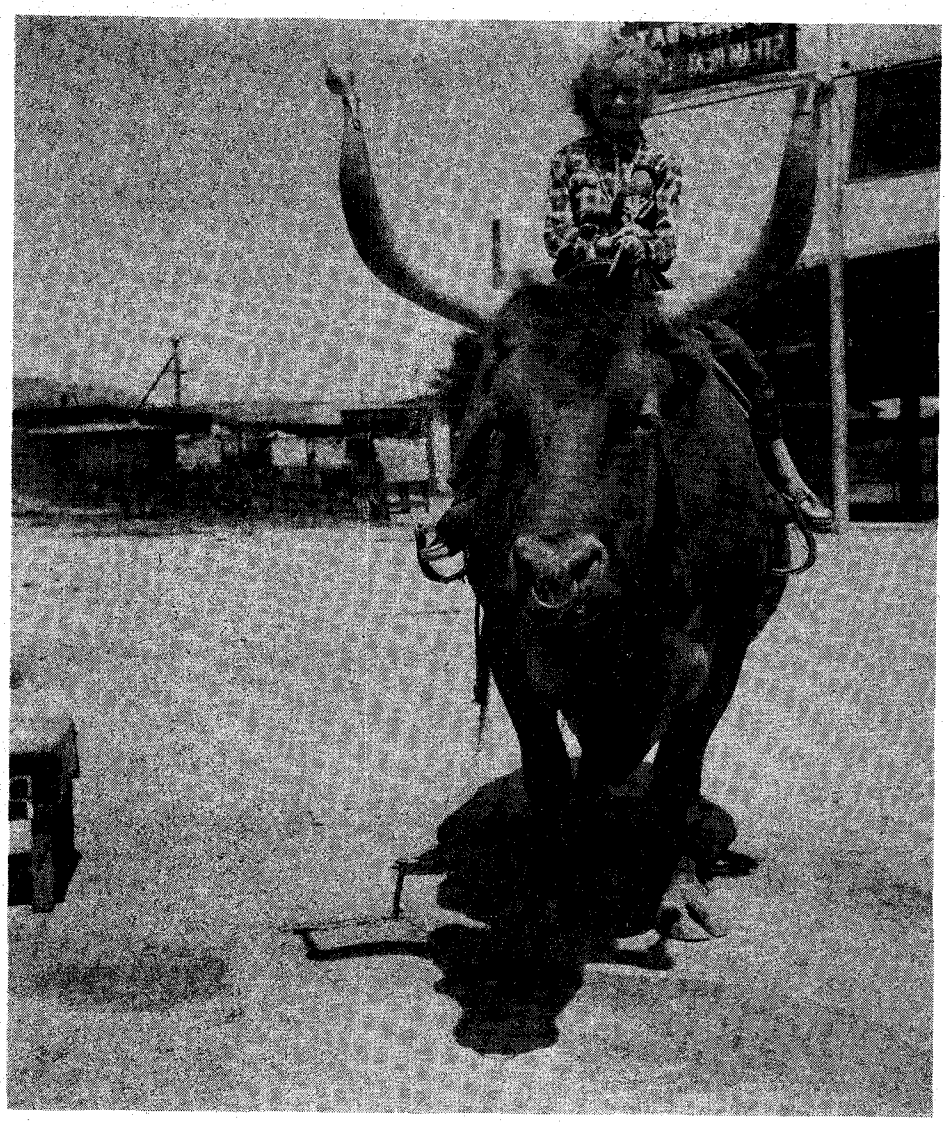
One morning while I was playing with Morgan, his grandmother asked me to go out to the barn where the old man slept and call him to breakfast. I don't know why she asked me to go unless I was closer to the barn than her grandson. I was greatly upset when I found the old man dead; he had died in his sleep.

Morgan and I remained friends for years until he was killed over a card game in Dallas, Texas.

I had a little white pony called Billy Barlow that was given to me by J. P. White, Sr. I also had two burros which an old prospector had given me. One day another prospector came by and offered two five-dollar gold pieces for them. That was real money for a boy.

We had plenty of good water in our well and people came from miles around to get drinking water. One day Monico Peralta came for water and had with him some little Mexican mares about

Below, Bundi-Mae Avant (Elroy), daughter of Fred and Betty Avant, shown at the Gallup Indian Celebration in 1947. The ox, owned by a party from Oklahoma, weighed over a ton.



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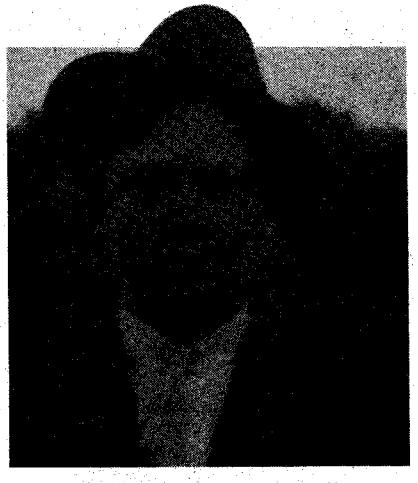

Above, Bundy at age 17, while at Lincoln, New Mexico.

the size of burros. One had a colt he offered to sell me for ten dollars—the exact amount of money I had.

I went running to get my money and my mother came out to see what I wanted to buy. She didn't think much of the colt, but I believe she figured I'd learn the value of money by making a mistake, so she let me buy it. Instead, the little mare produced many good horses in the years I had her. I got the fabulous price of $240 for one of them.

FATHER saw a good future in farming the fertile valleys of New Mexico, so in 1905 he bought a 3,800-acre farm from Judge John Y. Hewett of White Oaks. The land ran along both sides of the Ruidoso from just above Glencoe to what we called the "Narrows." I believe it was about where the road now crosses the river before you come to Ruidoso Downs. The price was one dollar per acre and ninety-nine years to pay!

Father bought the most up-to-date farming tools available—a riding breaking plow, disks, and harrows to prepare the land; then reapers, rowbinders, cultivators and wagons to harvest the crops. We threshed our oats with a treadmill-type thresher powered by a walking horse. It was something like a squirrel-in-a-cage sort of thing and was tough on a horse. About two hours at a time was all he could do.

Every member of the family had something to do. Now that I was twelve years old, I had my shares of the chores, and on a farm there is no end to them. Hogs to feed, cows to milk, miles to ride to find the work horses and saddle horses, plus many other duties.

It was hard work but there was money to be made raising feed. We paid for the farm in three years. And we made new friends. The Coe clan all lived on the Ruidoso below us. There were three families of them. Jap Coe and his family lived near us. There were five sons: Ross, Ed, Ben, Charley, and Harvey; and three daughters, Sadie, Jessie, and Lillie.

Ross Coe was seven or eight years my senior, and since he was the best rider and roper in the country, he was my hero. I set my aim on being as good as he was when I got a little older. Without intending to brag, I think I made it.

George Coe and his wife Phoebe had three sons; Will T., Roy L., and Walter. They had three girls: Grace, Mayme, and Mina. Mina died while attending school in Capitan.

The Frank Coes had six girls: Sidney, Annie, Winnie, Agnes, Edith, and Helena. Wilbur was the only boy and he was handicapped by having had infantile paralysis when he was little. In spite of his handicap he was a surprisingly good cowboy. His legs were almost useless, so he rode with his hands on the pommel of the saddle. I have seen him rope a 400-pound calf, slide down the shoulder of his horse and go down the rope on his knees. He could throw and tie a calf in pretty good time. He never asked any odds while working on the range. No matter how cold or wet, he stayed on the job to the end.

We kids rode anything that we could catch, from the milk pen calves to outlaw horses and mules, and Annie Coe was right in there with us. She was the best woman rider I ever saw, and her sister Edith was not far behind.

ONE TIME we gathered 3,000 head of horses from the Feliz and Penasco Creeks and about 300 of them belonged to the Coes. Most were good horses, but there were some outlaws, too. One was called Grey Eagle.

At a Fourth of July gathering on top of the mountains at what was called the V corrals, Ross was to ride him. His saddle was equipped with ox-bow stirrups, a kind I never used because there was too much danger of a man's foot going through the stirrup and hanging him to the horse. That is what happened to Ross. When his foot went through the stirrup, the horse threw him.

He was bobbing around, head down, bouncing like a puppet on a string while the horse bucked and kicked at him. My

Below, Bundy Avant's parents, L. F. Avant and wife, Ella.

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father jerked his rifle from the scabbard on his saddle and leaped at the fence to shoot the horse. Before he could get a bead on the horse and be sure he wouldn't hit Ross, the boot slipped off and Ross fell free. He had some bruises, but wasn't badly hurt.

Annie Coe took Gray Eagle and made a pet out of him. He threw her a few times when she got careless, but she would scold him and pet him and get back on him. At last he became as gentle with her as any horse could be.

George Coe lived near what was later called Tunstall Canyon, after George brought the body of Tunstall out of there. He told of finding both Tunstall and his horse dead, and the killers had laid Tunstall's body alongside his dead horse, then raised the horse's head and placed Tunstall's arm under it. This cold-blooded killing started the Lincoln County War, and the Coes lined up with Billy the Kid.

Every member of the Frank Coe family played some kind of an instrument, and we rode as far as twenty-five miles to dances. With the Coe girls and Wilbur, we always had music to dance by. George Coe was well liked but Frank was not liked by some people because of killing Irvin Lessnett. Irvin had been keeping company with Sidney, and they were secretly planning to be married. So Irvin wrote her a note telling her what night he would be down and they were to go to Lincoln and be married.

Unfortunately, he gave the note to Ross to deliver and Ross opened it and read it. Whatever it said, he took it to Frank, instead of to Sidney. On the night Irvin rode up up leading a horse for Sidney to ride in their elopement, Frank was waiting with a shotgun. He stepped out on the porch, and blew Irvin's body in half with one blast. I don't know what was in the note but he came clear. People thought that since Sidney was twenty-two she should have been allowed to marry whomever she pleased. Frank could be generous, though. He offered to pay my tuition and other expenses if I'd go to college with Wilbur and help the crippled boy.

OUR FARM prospered and since my father had to be away on Ranger business so much, I gradually took over the management of the cattle. My brother Leslie like to farm so well that when he went out with a team to plow, somebody usually had to go get him to eat and sleep. We began running cattle in the National Forest, my father being the first person to take out a permit in 1902. Clemente C. Hightower was the district Forest Ranger and he issued the permit and numbered it Number One. The government charged five cents a head per year to run a cow in the forest.

My mother was a strong, competent ranch woman. We always milked ten or twelve cows to get enough milk and butter for the family, but they were not really milk cows. We just penned up any old range cow that looked like she might give a little milk. Some were wild as deer and we had to tie their heads to the fence and hobble their hind legs to get close enough to milk them. We kept the calves in the pen in the daytime so the cows would come to them. This made it well after dark by the time we got them milked, so to save time I usually rode out after them.

On this particular evening I heard the cows bawling in an unnatural manner, so I loped down in the valley to see what was bothering them. They were in an anxious bunch, being circled by two lobos. I was still riding hard a hundred yards away when an old roan cow ran out at one of the wolves, head lowered and bellowing loudly. Seeing her leave the herd, the other wolf dashed in quicker than the eye could follow and slashed her hamstring. The cow went down, and there is no doubt the wolves would have eaten her if I hadn't come up just then. I had no gun—which the wolves realized—and they were not afraid of me. But I finally managed to drive them away, and then raced for home to tell Mother.

She looked grim, then told us to get the wagon and haul the cow to the corral. Mother had some heavy twine which she coated with beeswax. She threaded the twine into a big needle used for mending shoes and, while we held the cow still, she sewed the tendons back together.

There was a problem of keeping the cow from walking on the leg until the tendons had time to knit. This was solved by tying a piece of board to the back of the leg in a couple of places and then again high up on the thigh. In a couple of weeks the cow was walking as well as ever.

There is another story about this same cow. The hamstringing happened in the fall, and the following spring my father and I were camped in White Mountain Park which was our summer range. Shortly after sunup I was still lazing around while Father cooked breakfast over the campfire. It was a beautiful setting, a little valley with grass knee-high, pines on the hills rising from the valley, and our cows and calves calmly grazing.

The old roan cow now had a snow-white calf just a week old. I lay idly watching a large bald eagle circling overhead. Suddenly the eagle dropped out of the sky like a bullet and caught the little white calf in the center of its back with its talons. Flapping slowly away, dragging the calf on the ground part of the time, part of the time able to lift the calf in the air, the eagle headed straight for a deep ravine. He sailed out over it with the calf, then dropped it just as a sea gull drops a clam to break the shell open.

I shot out of my bedroll and yelled to my father what was happening, running for my pony at the same time. Father grabbed my rifle and handed it to me as I got the bridle on my pony and swung up bareback. I rode down to the canyon and found the ilttle calf, its flesh torn to the hollow in the small of its back and badly shattered from the fall on the rocks. I hated to do it, but a bullet in the head ended its misery.

Then I went for the eagle. I tied my pony to a small tree and started out on foot in the direction the eagle had flown.

Mrs. Thresa May West Avant, Bundy's wife, in 1928.

When I saw him sitting on a rock picking the flesh of the calf out of his talons and eating it, it gave me great pleasure to aim that rifle. Back at camp we measured him and found his wingspan to be seven feet.

Eagles were just one of the predators the stock had to contend with; there were also wolves, bears and mountain lions.

FROM the time I was a small boy tagging after my father on his trips to Roswell, I enjoyed listening to him talk with grown men. It took us three or four days to get to Roswell, and we camped at least two nights on the way. If the whole family went, we put our teams in Louie Keel's Feed Yard and stayed at the Virginia Inn or at the Capitan Hotel.

On one of those trips to Roswell I re-

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member there was a cattleman's or a banker's convention. I watched a dice game being played on the boardwalk in front of the Capitan Hotel. At times there was as much as $5,000 in the game.

At another game in front of the old Mission Barber Shop, Bob Corn came out of the shop and stood in line waiting for his turn to throw. After three or four throws, he lost the dice. The barber had come out and was the next man in line. Bob offered the dice to him, but he said he had no money. Bob threw down a twenty and told him to shoot it all. The barber made his point and didn't give up the dice until he had run his winnings to $2,700. He used the money to buy out the shop.

I began to feel more and more grown up, and when the men began to address me as an equal I guess it went to my head for a while. I sometimes went to town by myself or with some of the other young bucks, and we always put up at Aunt Kate's rooming house. On this occasion, there was a nice looking young woman staying there, who claimed to be the wife of a railroad man. We all rather doubted this, and when she began making eyes at me I thought I was pretty much of a man.

The others began kidding me and betting that I could not make a date with her. I was rather in awe of her but rather than back down, asked her to go for a drive. To my surprise, she agreed. We set the time for five o'clock that day, and I hustled down to the livery stable to arrange for a horse and buggy.

Sam, the black man who was stable boy there, let me have a pretty dun horse that was a favorite for rides. He carried himself proudly and was a free traveler. So exactly at five o'clock I drove up to the rooming house, and the lady was right there. I cut the wheels around so that she could get in the buggy without getting dust on her dress, and we headed out on a road going north.

Quite a ways out we saw a sandy draw, and the lady suggested it might be fun to play in the sand. I was all for it, particularly when she suggested that the seat cushion and laprobe be brought along. But she didn't head for the sand bar we saw from the road; she went around a bend toward a more distant one. Cutting her eyes at me, she said, "We don't want to be seen from the road; someone might get the wrong impression."

That was fine with me, so I laid the cushion and laprobe carefully down on the sand. Then the lady said, kind of blushing, "Will you wait here a few minutes?" I nodded and she walked off. Well, I waited and waited but she didn't come back, so finally I went back to where we had left the buggy. It was gone, and I could just see its dust way down the road back to town.

I sat down and cussed myself for all kinds of a fool. I knew I couldn't go walking back to town carrying that cushion and laprobe; yet if I didn't carry them back, it would cost me a month's wages to pay for losing them. So I started walking and it was good and dark when I finally got back to the livery stable.

Old Sam acted like it was an everyday thing for a man to walk in carrying a cushion and laprobe, but I was grim. "Yes sir," he said, when I asked him, "lady brung in the horse and buggy hours ago."

I looked at Sam and thought I saw a twinkle in his dark eyes. "Sam," I said, "if you want to make a friend for life, keep this under your hat."

Sam gave me a wide grin, "Mr. Bundy, that *hoss* couldn't drag nothin' out o' me."

It cost me but I thought I'd better add a reward to insure Sam's silence.

Late that night I snuck into the rooming house. When breakfast time came, the lady sat right down at the table with me and the others, saying a cheerful "Good morning" all around, just as if nothing had happened. My friends tried to act the same way and no one said a word to me. It seemed strange they didn't even ask me if I had enjoyed the buggy ride. It must have been the look on my face that kept anyone from making a wisecrack.

That incident took some of the confidence out of me as far as thinking I was a lady killer. We left for home that day, and I never saw my buggy-date again. I have always wondered how much they paid her to pull the trick on me.

Bundy Avant (plaid shirt) on an antelope hunt with friends in 1947.

I WAS growing up, learning some common sense, and as our cow herd increased and Father was away more and more the responsibility fell on me. When roundup time came, I went with the wagons of other ranchers, never receiving any pay because in this way we were able to work our own stock without having to hire a big crew. I came to know most of the famous names of the day and the brands their cattle wore. John Chisum branded the "Long S." It was put on lying down, and began near the shoulder and ran all the way back to the hip, and when it "grew," as brands sometimes did, it really was a long S. No one could explain why brands sometimes did grow, though one idea was that the phase of the moon had something to do with it.

Chisum also used the earmark known as the "Jingle Bob," called that because the ear was cut in such a way that the end of the ear jingled when the animal walked.

J. J. Tannyhill owned the Spur, which was also his brand. There were many other famous brands, such as the Blocks and the Diamond A. The V Pitchfork V was owned by James E. Cree and his cattle ranged on both sides of the White Mountains. I knew all of these men, as well as dozens of men with smaller herds, and hundreds of fine cowboys.

Captain Charles Goodnight and Colonel Henry Fountain were friends of my grandfather, Captain E. B. Simonds. In fact, Colonel Fountain spent his last Christmas at our house before his disappearance near the Organ Mountains. I also knew John W. Poe who organized the Citizen's National Bank; he was plain-spoken but fair-minded and honest. My special friend was J. P. White, Sr., who gave me my little white pony Billy Barlow as well as a real shop-made saddle from the J. C. Patterson establishment of Roswell.

We all furnished our own horses for the roundup but quite often the good riders would ride mean horses for older

(Continued on page 45)

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LOST SOLDIERS' MINE

By LARRY HENNIGH

Photos Courtesy O'Dell and Alice Robbins

Somewhere in the Coquille Mountains is a very cold trail to a very real gold vein!

THERE is a trick of the trade which an old prospector told me, for locating veins of gold. Close your eyes and throw a penny into the wilderness, then open your eyes and try to find that penny. You will find cracks and crevices, rocks of varying shapes and colors, and more places God created for the apparent purpose of concealing pennies than you have ever imagined existed.

Chances are you will never find the penny, which is why the prospector advised against using nickels and dimes in the experiment. It could run into money. If the penny happens to land near a vein of gold, you have a good chance of discovering a fortune. If you look for gold itself—even if it is there—you will walk right past it every time.

Every year more and more people test this theory, the wrong way, in their unending search for the Lost Schieffelin mine. According to the records. Ed Schieffelin, wealthy discoverer of the Tombstone mine in Arizona, returned to his native state of Oregon and resumed prospecting in Douglas County. In 1897 he was found dead in the doorway of his cabin near Day's Creek. His letters and diary indicated he had made a major strike: "Found it again, richer than Tombstone." The search for his lost mine was on. It still is.

A few discouraged fortune hunters have concluded that there never was a lost Schieffelin mine in the first place. The note in the diary must have been the delusion of a dying man, or even a cruel hoax. No lode of gold *that* big could possibly have eluded *that* many prospectors following the lead with *that* much interest for all these many years.

Eight miles up Cow Creek, out of Riddle, a treasure lies buried near Iron Mountain Creek. In 1925 the two young sons of a farmer living by the creek watched their father pour $2,000 in gold coins into a lead pipe, solder both ends shut, and walk out of the house with the family savings. Twenty minutes later their father returned empty-handed. Years later, when the old man died without revealing where he had hidden the pipe full of coins, the sons went searching. They checked every fence post, every walnut tree in the orchard, the corners of every building on the farm, all to no avail. Today the coins are worth at least $80,000, but even professional treasure hunters using metal detectors have been unable to find them. The number of places where someone might plausibly have hidden a treasure within a ten minute radius of the farm house are too numerous to check out in one lifetime.

THE LOST SOLDIERS' MINE, a few miles out of Glendale, offers an even clearer example of the scriptural admonition, "Search not for gold." According to the history books, a six-man detachment of the First Dragoons, stationed at Port Orford, managed in 1853 to get itself lost in the Coquille Mountains, while returning from a trail-scouting expedition to Jacksonville.

They were low on provisions and, being recently recruited Easterners, did not know how to live off the land. Their

Kathy Robbins inside shed, Roy Rannells outside, in 1955.

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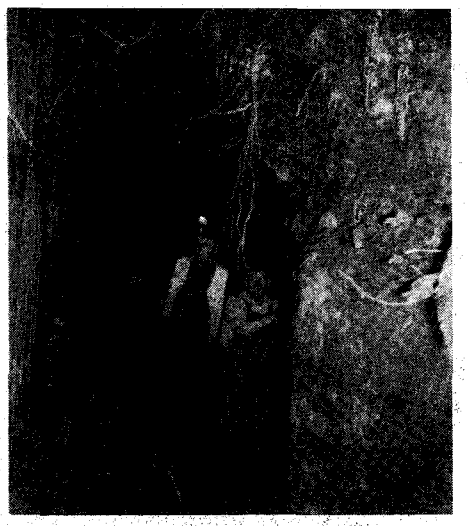


Above, and at bottom of page, Arthur Robbins and Roy Rannells at work.

commander, Lieutenant Stoneman, ordered them to make camp and sent Private Manley Martin down to the creek for water. As the young man bent over the stream, a glint of yellow caught his eye. With his saber he pried off some white quartz embedded with a yellow streak and returned to camp, where he joked that he had discovered gold. One of the soldiers, who knew something about metal, informed him it was no joke. The yellow streak *was* gold! The party forgot its misery and eagerly searched out the source, a vein of gold bearing quartz in an outcropping along the cliff above the stream.

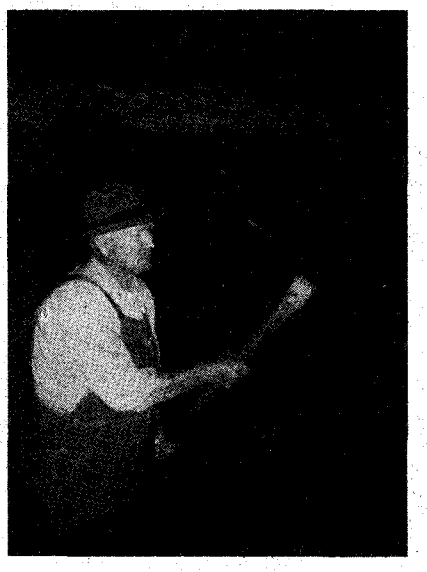
Lieutenant Stoneman had the party mark the spot by blazing four trees in the shape of a square, and then took on the more immediate problem of finding the detachment's way back to civilization.

Stoneman remained in the army, eventually rising to the rank of general, and later distinguished his career by becoming governor of California. The other five men were discharged, some the following year. Three of the soldiers, Manley Martin and former privates Schlisk and Schnedicker, set out from Jacksonville to work the ledge of gold-bearing quartz, but they were unable to find it.

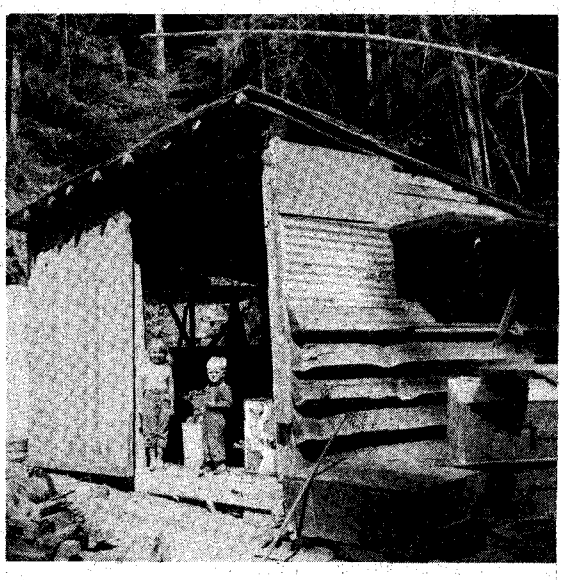
Some years later another party of prospectors accidentally came upon the four marked trees. They failed to locate the vein of gold, but at least they knew where they were at the time, on a small tributary near Cow Creek. A close friend of the six soldiers, Captain Packwood, visited the site in 1861, but no ledge of gold was to be found within the square. In August of that year Manley Martin explained to Packwood that they had not blazed the trees around the discovery; that would have been too obvious. Instead they marked an area a certain distance away. Only those who knew how far to walk and in which direction could go from the marked area to the deposit.

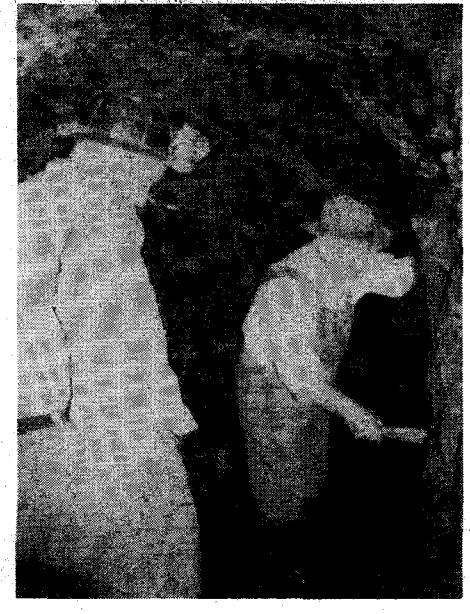
They made a deal. If Packwood and his partner, Brown, led him to the trees, Martin would take them from there to the gold. The three easily located the site, and Martin apparently found the lost lode.

Below, Arthur Robbins.



Below, little Kathy and Wesley Robbins at play near the mine site.





THE CIVIL WAR had begun, however, and the prospecting party, like the nation itself, became divided. Martin was a Kentuckian, while Brown was an ardent Abolitionist. Quarreling broke out, and Martin went his own way.

The remaining two carefully followed the track their ex-partner had made the previous day. The tracks led them up a small stream away from Cow Creek, along a game trail to a low hill with a depression on top. This was about five miles away from the soldiers' camp and a short distance from the west fork of Cow Creek. On top of the hill was a cedar tree with an old blaze. Presumably this was what Martin had been looking for, because the trail went no farther. But what did it mean?

Packwood and Brown combed the immediate area but found nothing of interest. Anger and frustration did not help either, and finally they had to abandon the search.

Late in the fall of 1861 Packwood joined the stampede to the new gold strikes in eastern Oregon. His fortunes improved, and he became a leading citizen of the mining town of Auburn. It was 1914 before he returned to Cow Creek in search of the elusive vein of quartz. By that time a forest fire had obliterated so many landmarks, the search was not even begun.

If Packwood could afford to give up, others were more persistent. William R. Murray, a successful trapper and hunter from Camas Valley, was among those who carefully accumulated clues as to where the lost mine might be found. In 1938 his diary was transcribed by an historian working for the W.P.A. Copies of the diary are available today in the Douglas County Library in Roseburg and at the County Museum. Murray quoted William P. Day as his authority, a man whose truth of statement was never doubted by anyone who knew him.

Shortly before Day died, he told Murray that someone who had claimed to be one of the six soldiers who made the original finding, had visited his ranch at Camas Valley, showed his pieces of rock which appeared to be half gold, and offered to take him to the source. As it was late in the fall and the going was very bad, Mr. Day would not start out until spring, and asked the ex-soldier to winter over with him. The other would not wait, but packed up and left. Three days later a severe storm came up, and the old soldier was never seen again.

According to the account, the soldiers had abandoned their horses about six miles north of Eden on Cow Creek. Gold was discovered at the base of an overhead seep by a soldier digging out gravel for a spot from which to dip water. The find was marked by a laurel tree, near Andy's Creek. It faced east and was covered by

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Killers' Trail of Thread

By W. T. BLOCK
Illustrations Courtesy Author

It led straight from a massacre site to the south bank of the Guadalupe, and there the pursuing white men overtook the murderers!

JOHN CASTLEMAN TO AUSTIN

Colorado January 17th 1826

DEAR SIR I wish to inform you that in my absence the Waco Indians Came to my House and plundered and Carried off the following articals two sheets two Quilts and Wagon Cover and nearly all our wearing Clothing and Table Furniture. it appears from the Conduct of those Indians that we Cannot Settle the frontiers of this Colony unless we Can have an understanding with them. for if they are allowed to Rob and plunder it will be impossible to settle the frontiers of this Country for I am determined to kill the first one that undertakes to Rob me again. which will Commence a war. I have always wished peace if we Could have it on honourable terms. I do think peace Can be made with those Indians. but it is not my place to dictate for you—

JOHN CASTLEMAN

[Addressed:] Colo. Stephen F. Austin Felipe de Austin

IT WAS May 1835 in the Green DeWitt colony located in the Mexican province of Texas-Coahuila. Along the banks of the Guadalupe River, about fifty miles east of old San Antonio de Bexar, spring was manifest on every bush and tree. It was a countryside unmarred by axe or plow, for the "advance of civilization" such as a cabin or wagon trail was rarely seen except near the village of Gonzales.

Along the lonely trail from Gonzales to San Antonio, there lived only one settler. John Castleman had brought his young family there to the valley of the Guadalupe sometime before 1825. He built a strong log cabin, complete with shutters that locked securely from the inside, and for defense against Indians he surrounded his home with a palisade of sharp cedar posts.

Nearby was a small lake and a shallow wagon ford across the Guadalupe, and once or twice a month some weary traveler, en route from Austin's colony to San Antonio, might stop for food and lodging at the cabin.

So it was, late one Saturday afternoon, when Castleman heard a loud shout outside. Instinctively grabbing his musket, Castleman went to the window and could see a stranger waving both arms in a broad arc to attract attention.

Upon reaching the palisade gate, Castleman learned that he was a French merchant named Gressier, seeking information about the route to San Antonio. Standing behind him was his small caravan of pack mules and three 2-wheeled carts, each of the latter covered with canvas and driven by a Mexican teamster.

Gressier had left New Orleans by steamboat two months earlier, and upon arrival at Natchitoches, Louisiana on Red River, had purchased carts and mules and engaged the Mexicans, late of San Antonio, as drivers to guide his caravan of hardware and dry goods across Texas. The men and animals were quite weary from the long day's journey and Gressier inquired where there might be a suitable watering-place and campsite for the night.

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Castleman directed the merchant to the small lake, some 300 yards distant toward the river, where there was plenty of water and grass for the mules, but he suggested that Gressier not camp for the night in the neighboring cedar brake.

"Stranger, you and your teamsters kin camp here in my yard tonight behind the palisade," Castleman offered. "A Comanche war party has been reported up north of here, and you'd be in bad shape if they showed up down there at the lake. There's plenty of well water and wood here, and in case of attack we'd have a better chance to defend your property and mine."

The Frenchman declined, however, remarking that they had not seen any Comanche signs along the trail. His Mexican hands were well armed and were experienced Indian fighters, and besides he didn't wish to endanger his benefactor any more than necessary, for he knew that mules and horses attracted Comanches like buzzards to carrion.

So Gressier and his teamsters drove the caravan down to the cedar brake where they parked the carts in a defensive perimeter, unharnessed the teams, watered and hobbled the mules, and allowed them to graze, after which they settled down for the night.

Gressier's cargo, although not discernible to the casual eye, was only slightly less attractive to marauders than his mule teams. The packs were filled with axe heads, hammers, knives, hoes, scissors, needles, and just about every hardware item that a frontier merchant required. The carts carried casks of green coffee, kegs of whiskey, dozens of bolts of cheap cotton prints, calico, alpaca, and muslins, yarn and knitting needles, boxes of spooled thread of every hue, and many other frontier necessities.

As darkness approached, Castleman barred his shutters and doors, secured his household, and retired for the night.

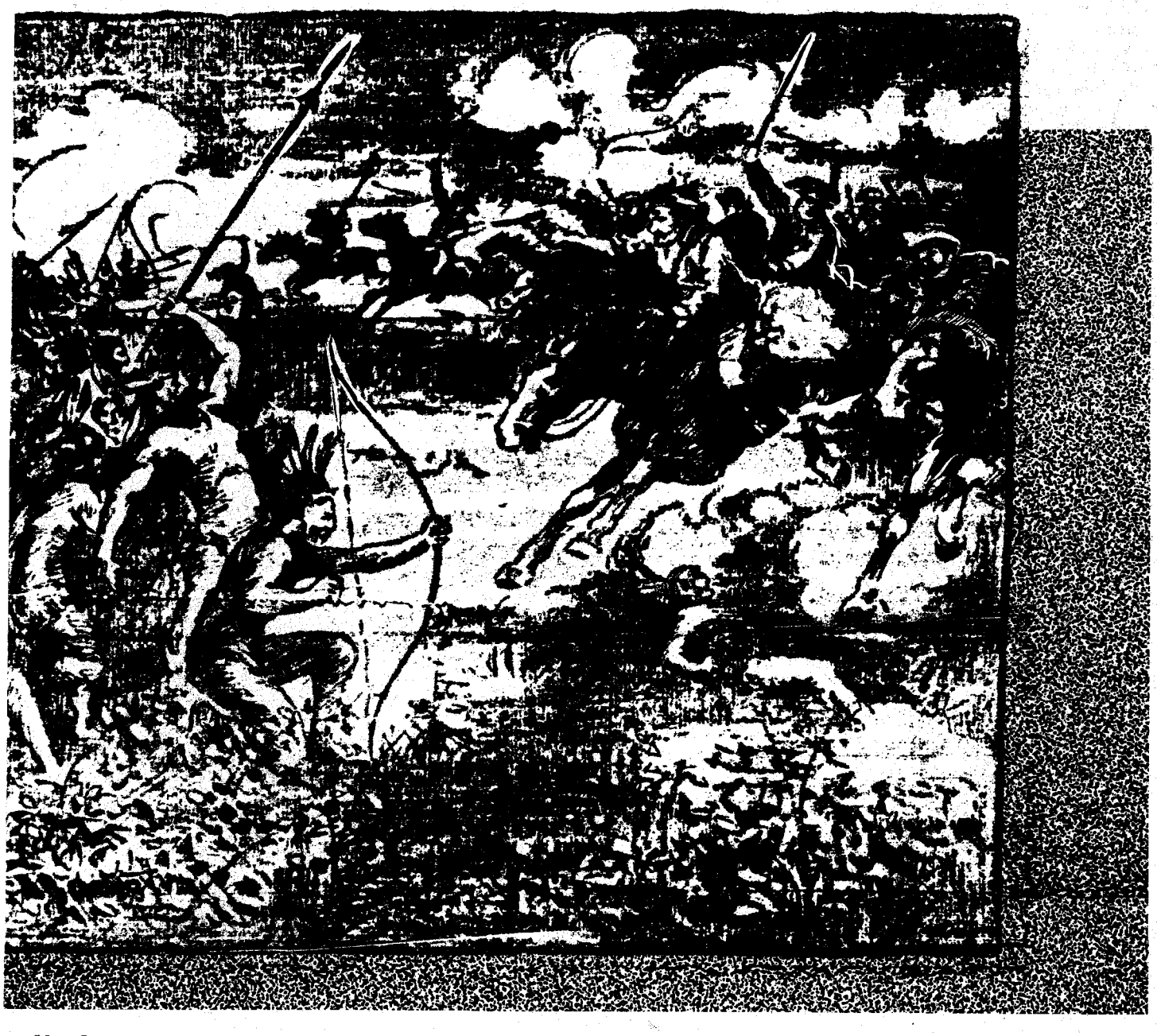
DAWN came amid a din of war whoops and musket fire. Even before the first rays of light punctured the horizon, a war party of Comanches were preparing to water their horses when they unwittingly stumbled into the Frenchman's campsite.

The Mexican teamsters were not totally unprepared. At their sides lay an assortment of loaded muskets and pistols, and when the first sound of Comanche voices and pony hoofs disturbed their slumber, the Mexicans loosed a volley of shot which sent the warriors scurrying for cover.

Before the war party could recover from its initial shock, Gressier and his men hurriedly overturned the carts in a triangle, stacked casks, packs, and bolts

(Continued on page 49)

The Rangers charged, and a furious battle commenced. Galveston Weekly News, January 15, 1891.



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Milt Bryan's Adventures on the Santa Fe Trail

(Continued from page 8)

course of action, and it was a hard decision to make. They would lighten their loads by burying the silver coins they carried. Each man, however, would keep a few.

Reconnoitering an island in the middle of the Arkansas River, they cached their silver between two cottonwood trees. Bryan wrote that the silver amounted to more than $10,000. Another estimate however, placed it at closer to $6,000. Although Bryan made no mention of the fact, the hiding place was known by some in 1828 as Chouteau's Island. Auguste Pierre Chouteau, a Frenchman, was attacked in the area during the summer of 1816 and had found shelter on the island. It is located about five miles southwest of present-day Lakin in Kearny County, Kansas.

IN AN EFFORT to avoid well-established trails closely watched by Indians, the traders continued north for three or four days until they reached a small stream, presumably Pawnee Fork now known as Pawnee River. They followed this stream eastward for ten days until they came onto the Santa Fe Trail once more, probably somewhere near present-day Larned. Then they followed the Arkansas River to near the site of Great Bend, Kansas, and continued east on the trail until they reached Cow Creek, not many miles north of where Hutchinson, Kansas is today. When they reached that point they were completely exhausted. Some of the men simply could not travel any farther.

Independence, Missouri, was still two hundred miles away. At Cow Creek the five strongest men were sent ahead to get help. The remaining fifteen would get along as best they could.

"I was one of the five selected to go ahead," wrote Bryan. "I shall never forget the terrible suffering we endured. We had no blankets to sleep under, and it was getting late in the fall. Some of us were barefoot, and our feet were so sore we left stains of blood in every footstep. Deafness seized upon us so greatly, occasioned by our weak condition, we could not hear the report of a gun a few feet distant. Two of our men laid down their guns, saying they could carry them no farther, and would die if they did not get some water.

"We left them, and went in search of some. After following a dry branch several miles, we found a puddle of muddy water, where we got half a bucketful. Although muddy, it was life for us, and we guarded it with jealous eyes. We returned to our comrades about daylight, and the water so refreshed them, they were able to resume the journey."

Bryan and his four companions resumed their weary line of march east, averaging about twenty miles a day. He recalled that they "subsisted for eleven days on one turkey, a coon, a crow, and some elm bark, with an occasional bunch of wild grapes."

After crossing the Missouri border into Jackson County, they discovered a cabin near the Big Blue River fifteen miles from Independence. "The occupants of the cabin were women seemingly very poor but they offered to share with us a pot of punkin they were boiling. When they first saw us they were terribly frightened because we were more like galvanized skeletons than living humans. They jumped upon the bed while we greedily devoured the punkin, having to refuse salt meat, as our teeth were so sore from long abstinence from salt. . . . In a short time two men came to the house, and took three of our party home with them."

Soon after daybreak the next morning the settlers brought horses and escorted Bryan and the four other traders to Independence. "Some one had gone on before, to notify the people of our safety, and when we arrived, they were having regimental muster and the most intense excitement prevailed.

"All business was suspended, and the whole town flocked around to hear the story of our remarkable adventures, and to render us assistance. We were half naked, footsore, haggard, and presented such a pitiful picture, the greatest sympathy was aroused in our behalf. We told the story of our comrades who had been left behind and without delay, seven men, with fifteen horses, started out to rescue them."

Within a matter of days the rescue party found all fifteen men. According to Bryan, the rescuers arrived "just in time to save them from death by starvation and exhaustion. Two were found about one hundred miles from Independence, and the balance were scattered along a distance of fifty miles, no more than two being found together."

The traders retained sense enough to travel together in pairs.

AS FOR Milt Bryan, he spent several days in the home of Charles Owens, county clerk of Jackson County, Missouri, to regain his strength, then bought a horse and started for his mother's home in Boone County, taking with him two hundred dollars in Mexican silver and a check on a St. Louis bank for $500. That was all of his trading profit he had been able to salvage.

When Bryan got to Franklin on the Missouri River near present-day Boonville, he informed Captain Means' family of the man's death. It was a painful task. Bryan then completed the journey to his mother's home where he remained all winter. His feet were so sore that it was weeks before he could use them normally.

After such an experience one might suppose that Milt Bryan had had his fill of adventure on the Santa Fe Trail. Such was not the case. By spring he was determined to return to Santa Fe and, in the process, recover the buried silver.

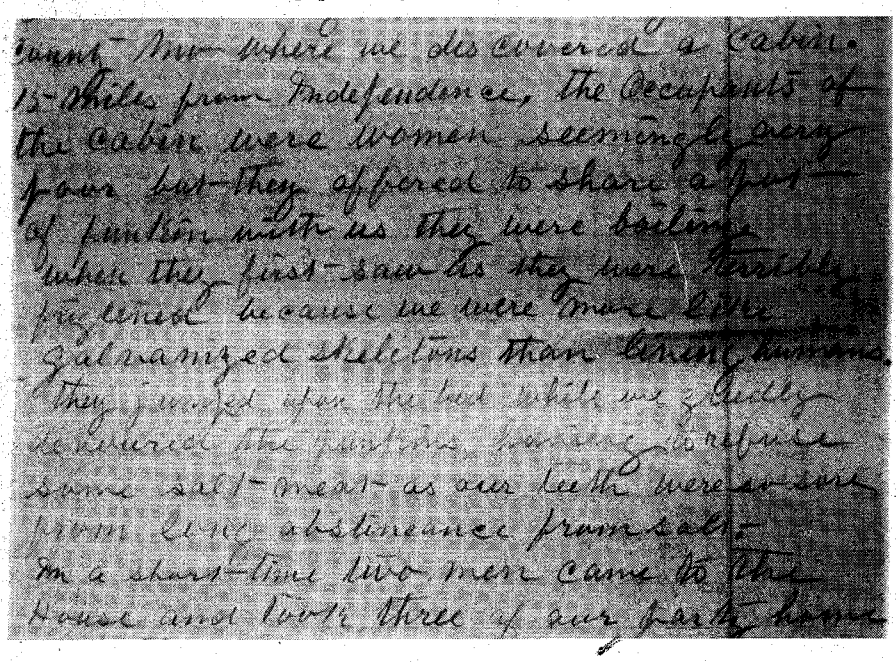
Bryan joined a new trading caravan of nearly forty wagons and about seventy men. The captain was Charles Bent, who would later control much of the trade on the southern plains from the famous "Bent's Fort" in what is today eastern Colorado.

"We left Fort Leavenworth about the 10th of May," he wrote, "and soon were out on the lonesome plains, seeing nothing alive but vast herds of buffalo and wild horses. Many of the soldiers had never seen any buffalo before, and took delight in slaughtering them. At Walnut Creek we halted to secure a cannon which had been thrown in there two years before, and succeeded in fishing it out. With a seine made of brush and grapevine, we caught more fine fish than we could dispose of; and one day a great deal of excitement was produced by a band of Indians running an enormous herd of buffalo onto us.

"The soldiers fired at them [the buffalo] by platoons, killing scores of them. We always traveled in two lines, and formed a hollow square at night, in which all slept, except those on guard. Frequently someone would discover a rattlesnake or a horned frog in bed with him,

(Continued on page 44)

A portion of Milton Bryan's fading manuscript describing his adventures on the Santa Fe Trail one hundred and fifty years ago. It was written in pencil in 1885.



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By NELL IVES
Photos Courtesy Author

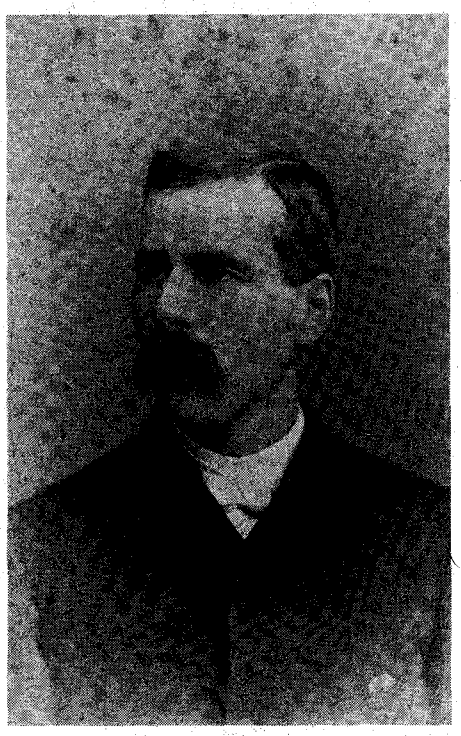
LOREN IVES and his wife, Bertha, had been in Stevens County, Kansas two years at the time of the Hay Meadows murders. They got their water in Woodsdale, the town Colonel Samuel Wood had laid out, where there was a square with a windmill on each corner, pumping water for anyone who wanted it. Visiting in town each time their water barrels ran low, they knew all about the argument whether Woodsdale or Hugoton would be named the county seat and qualify for the railroad soon to be built through the area.

They knew of Mrs. Carpenter who kept house for Colonel Wood and his wife, but were not really acquainted with her until the end of the long and terrible story that ended with Colonel Wood's death.

When Dr. Voorhees, the Quaker doctor, sent word to Woodsdale that young Herbert Tonny had come to him and had been hidden, Woodsdale organized both to protect the boy and bring back the bodies of the murdered men. It was assumed there might be more trouble when the last was done, so the town decided to send one man, unarmed, after the bodies. Will Kier, former wagon freighter, had a good wagon, so he was chosen for the job, while other men, including Loren Ives, took turns caring for Herbert Tonny.

When Kier got part way back to Woodsdale with the bodies, he was met by a group of men from Hugoton who made him turn aside and drive to their town and down the main street of it. The residents, including women, lined the sides of the street and he was ordered to stop so the bodies could be counted and see that the men were really dead. The count showed one short, and that one was the boy.

Loren Ives



Next morning during the Woodsdale funeral for the dead it was noted that men with spy glasses were on a rise overlooking the town and, it was thought, trying to locate Herbert Tonny. This would be so that he could be put out of the way before he could testify about the shooting.

The boy had been hidden in a cornfield and those taking him water, food and medicine entered the field at a different spot each time, counting the rows of corn they passed and the number of steps from the edge of the field. The men of the town rotated the work, so that no one individual could be singled out and possibly killed by watching Hugoton marksmen.

THE "COFFEE" WOMAN

—sequal to "Bloodshed in Kansas" which appeared in our April issue

It was, in fact, more of a probability than a possibility, for Hugoton had determined, it seemed, to wipe out any evidence against them.

THIS was the background of the Ives family's last weeks in Woodsdale. Talking it over and assessing the general character of goings-on, they decided to move away. Loren had been already considering this because his crops had failed; he couldn't get a water well on his claim and western Kansas just didn't seem attractive to either him or his wife. He had been raised in eastern Canada and she in central Illinois and they preferred something less parched and windy than Woodsdale, so they moved to eastern Kansas.

The legal battles over the Hay Meadows murders went on and on and, since the Ives had left in the middle of the difficulty, they took great interest in the weekly Woodsdale newspaper

Bertha Baker Ives

which they subscribed to before leaving that country.

Finally there was a shocking announcement in the paper that Colonel Wood had been shot in the courtroom where he had gone to give evidence against the Hugoton wrongdoers. The article reported that Wood's wife had been among the spectators in the courtroom and that their housekeeper had been with her. The Ives couple remembered the tall, raw-boned Mrs. Carpenter.

Besides reporting news of the county seat fight, the newspaper ran the usual things of local interest, one being the moving in of new citizens and the moving away of others. Bertha and Loren Ives had been mentioned, along with the name of the town where they got their mail. It was some months after they had established their new home that Colonel Wood was killed.

Soon after that newspaper story came out Loren, who had gone to town after groceries and mail, found Mrs. Carpenter waiting for him there. She told him she had come to make his family a visit.

It seemed rather odd, considering that they had been merely acquaintances in Woodsdale, but it was the pioneer way to make any guest welcome and ask no questions about the why of the visit.

They had a small two-room house, so small that the hired man helping Loren with farm work, slept in the corn crib. There were two children in the family, which made the little house quite full, but they made room for Mrs. Carpenter as a matter of course. The food budget was as skimpy as the house but it was shared willingly also, even to furnishing Mrs. Carpenter with coffee anytime she wanted, and she wanted a lot. She drank coffee at meals, between meals, and even during the night. Just between themselves Bertha and Loren called her 'the coffee woman.'

Not that they minded her drinking coffee so much; but what they did mind, somewhat, was her refusal to talk about

(Continued on page 51)

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SHINGLE MILL COUNTRY

There's lots to remember about it—but not too many left to remember. Kids born there had to be tough to make it past their third birthday . . .

By PETER PIERCE
Photo Courtesy Author

NEAR THE TURN of this century life was fundamentally a difficult business. At least it was in a lumber camp. Challenged by a world patterned with misfortune, we had to come to its terms to keep our sanity. Occasionally we could even laugh at our predicament. A virgin forest, it was shingle mill country.

In 1908, '09 and '10 I was lucky and attended public schools, still have my McGuffey's first reader; but in 1911 all we had was a subscription school, located in the cypress swamps just about four miles northwest of Perry, Arkansas as the crow flies. (We called it arKansas.)

When John Reynolds and his mill foreman Bill Butler started to move in the equipment, they were met with a 1,200-foot length of mud bog where teams couldn't travel. Small trees were cut, trimmed and laid side by side to make a bouncy road over it.

Water was everywhere, some deep, some shallow. Dry knolls, big and little, showed up here and there. As soon as a well was dug for fresh water, eleven frame houses and a few tents were put up around it. Our school was held in a tent. A young woman of twenty-three was employed as teacher and each family donated one dollar a month for her support.

Dad was nightwatchman at the mill where thirteen men worked. Other men worked out in the forest, cutting and dragging timber with oxen. Many cypress stumps were so massive and high from the ground that scaffolds were built around the base with a platform on top from where trees were cut. They fell into the water with a great splash. Logs were then floated to the mill yards where they were snaked out with ox teams.

Work days at the mill were ten, eleven and twelve hours. The length of work days was regulated by the seasons. Wages were ten cents an hour. That was double the wage paid to the people living and working on the Martin Plantation just over the adjoining county line of Conway, and they had longer days—from sun to sun. Their maximum wage was fifty cents a day.

The Martin farm was located near the foot of Petit Jean, now called Rockefeller Ranch Mountain. It ranged north and east and contained a vast acreage. Its owners were two aged men, Tom and George Martin. They were the descendants of another Tom and George Martin who once lived there.

The Martins were fairly good fellows but there was never a school or a church building on the farm, or anywhere in the area surrounding it. The result—a backward type group of people developed, and at the age of nine I was one of them, developing.

A RIDING BOSS was employed by the Martins and he rode back and forth through the fields watching the people work. Both men and women, black and white, and their kids chopped cotton in the hot sun. The farm management maintained a large, well stocked commissary where people could trade against their wages.

Prices at the store? Salt sold for one cent a pound; one day's wage bought fifty pounds. Twenty-four pound sacks of flour sold for fifty cents, another day's wage.

Houses on the farm where people lived were old and delapidated. Flies swarmed everywhere. There was too much sickness and death. We heard of no typhus, but some people had pellagra. Pneumonia was a quick and dreaded killer. We knew no treatment for it. Every winter old skin-and-bone horses starved and froze to death out in the snow.

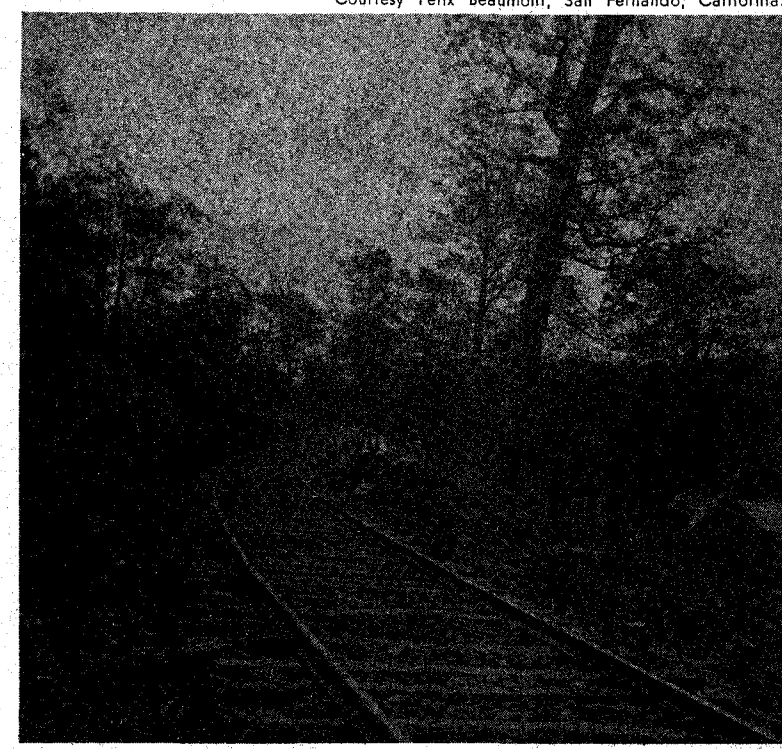
A child was fortunate if he lived to the age of three years. Diphtheria—membranous croup—killed in less than four days. Whooping cough, too, was often fatal. Mumps and measles we survived, but they left their scars.

Another serious illness was a diarrhea, called "summer complaint" by the locals. If a doctor came it was almost certain death for any child treated. He killed them, too—with calomel. Calomel is useful, but can be dangerous if dosage is not controlled.

Many old grannies brewed tea from blackberry roots and claimed a measure of success. With calomel, though, the patient's whole mouth and throat became raw; cankers came out on the face; teeth blackened, loosened and fell out; the child became salivated. No matter, that's all the doctor ever gave mothers for their babies.

Switchback on Boston Mountain, Arkansas.

Courtesy Felix Beaumont, San Fernando, California.



JUST a short stay at the Martins' scared us back to the mill camps in Perry County. But if the flies were at the Martins by the quadrillions, the mosquitoes were at the mill camps by quintillions. There was little diarrhea at the mill camps but there was malaria. A chill tonic loaded with quinine was used, but people died anyway. Some died with congestive chills; others, with swamp fever. Both were malarial, but with a difference.

When chills started they came on a

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regular, every-other-day schedule. With the first chill attack the patient was freezing, shaking, and suffering with a minor convulsion. Within the next hour fever would rise and drive the chill out. The next day the patient could return to work or go back to school.

But on the third day the chill was back. Again he was freezing, shaking and in another minor convulsion. Covers on the bed didn't help, but a hot stove in the room even in July—might. With chill attacks I found the most comfort in lying out in the sunshine if the temperature was above 90 degrees.

If not controlled, chills would begin occurring daily. Then in continuity they went on to merge into a major convulsion where the patient died with his teeth chattering. That's when it was said he died with a "congestive chill."

If a patient's temperature rose high enough to drive out such a chill, it had to reach 107, 108 or 109 degrees, but he died anyway. It was then said that he died with "swamp fever."

All I ever saw with those high temperatures were unconscious, and when they died their whole body was mottled in a purple hue.

One thing we did have at the mill camps was sufficient groceries. Vegetable gardens were our mainstay in the summertime, and raccoons, rabbits and 'possum were available during the winter months.

Wolves, too, were plentiful. They never harmed anybody, but when we went to the mill with Dad at night the wolves scared us. They seemed to gather in groups at night and howl.

Snakes were another dread in those swamps—especially the foul-smelling cottonmouth and the treacherous copperhead. Most of the copperheads we found were from six to thirty-two inches long but some were found that measured thirty-eight inches. These were big and heavy, and a man told us kids that some of them measured four inches across the back. "Steer clear of them," the man told us. Rattlers? We didn't find very many except along some dusty mountain road.

WHEN I was ten we moved into Perryville, the county seat town. Perryville had the biggest school and the most kids we had ever seen.

Holly Mountain School, Van Buren County, Arkansas, 1908. Left to right in front row: Annabelle Massey, Fount Massey, Gus Huie, Louis Pierce, Clarence Rice, Emmaline Douchell, Mary Bonds, Bertha Barlow, and Rosa Bonds. Second row: Delia Carter, Etta Holly, Florence Rice, G. W. Perkins, Bob Maddox, Arkie Holly, Anna Carter, and Minnie Douchell. Third row: Oscar Rice, John Douchell, Allie Williams, Effie Bonds, John Carter, Roe Bonds, Oscar Douchell, William Bonds, Viola Massey, Myrtle Huie, June Blankenship, Delie Huie, and Lula Barlow. Back row: Charley Massey, Delbert Pierce, Peter Pierce, Charles Huie, Jim Bonds, Scott Huie, Porter Perkins, Ovid Perkins, Silas Williams, Samuel Carter, and Eddie Barlow. The teacher was Bob Maddox, while G. W. Perkins and Scott Huie were school board members.

In Perryville there was a place called the Gypsy campground. When these people came through the country they lifted corn out of the fields along the roadside to feed their teams. No Gypsy kid ever went to school. When camped, the men loafed while the women walked around in the town. If your door was open they didn't knock; they just walked in. Their *excuse* for entering was that they had come to tell fortunes, but their *reason* for entering was to slip something out of

(Continued on page 55)

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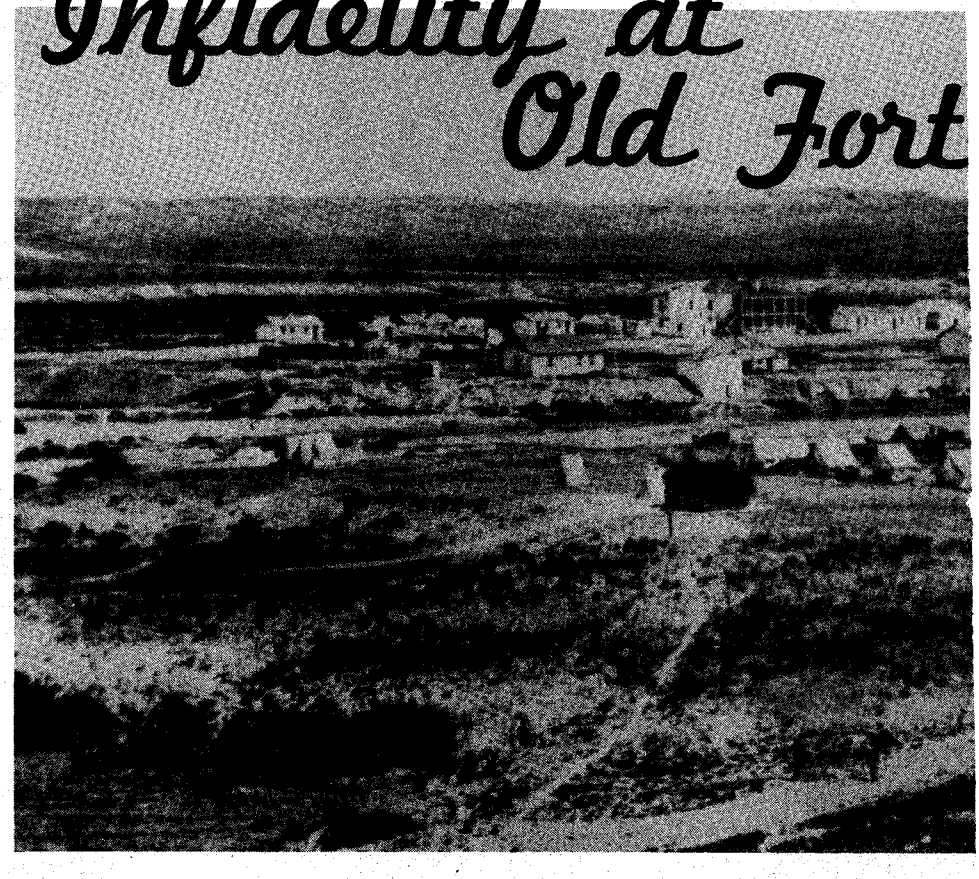
"Your faithful Anna"—poor girl, she should dry; her Infidelity at Old Fort



By RUTH SOUTHWORTH BROWN

IN the early 1930s old Fort Laramie lay forlorn and forgotten on the Wyoming prairie where the Laramie River flows into the Platte. Like stark, jagged fingers, the crumbling ruins of the hospital reached skyward. Nearby, the graveyard held a few headstones of native rock, more of wooden slabs, and many mounds unmarked at all except for grass and weeds.

The officers quarters, Old Bedlam, with balconies sagging and backbone weakened, braced itself for another winter. This building, the sutler's store and trading post, the barracks, Post Commander's quarters, and ruins of service buildings surrounded the parade ground. A guardhouse nearby, with one tiny window, was a reminder of army discipline.

Old-timers told many stories about the old Fort, but countless dramatic ones were lost in the ruins by a regrettable circumstance of the time. In those Depression days a few families sought housing in any buildings that were livable, and in cleaning out rooms burned great piles of old newspapers, correspondence, and other documents.

I was teaching at Fort Laramie, the town a mile downstream. One day a student showed me some mouldy, faded letters found in a second-floor closet in Old Bedlam. I copied those letters precisely except for the real name of the man to whom all were addressed. It seems that he was the trading post's sutler.

THE first letter was addressed to Mr. Matt Benton, Esquire; Fort Laramie, Territory of Wyoming; from Omaha May 11th 1879:

My Dear Matt, I received your long looked for letter yesterday and was so glad to hear from you, for thought sure you were sick.

Johnnie is well enough now, to go downstairs, and I had him out doors yesterday, he was so delighted to get out again, his ear is much better, and I think will get well now. Love I told you about his ear before . . . it was caused from the severe cold he had, and the winding up of the scarleteria, which he had. I commenced to wean him Friday. . . .

I am sorry Love that you have to work so hard for I know it is hard to be up so late at night.

Sweet-heart you say I can do as I like about going to Virginia, now I will go, if Mr. R. can get me a pass, so you may write him about it.

I would rather go to Laramie and be with you, but if I cannot I might as well be in Va. as here. So if you want me to go, I will, and Love write at once, and let us have it settled.

I will close now hoping to hear from you oftener, With all my love and many kisses I remain

Your Faithful Anna

* * *

Omaha, July 20th 1879

My Dear Sweetheart,

I will now try and answer your sweet letter, received yesterday. I was feeling so low spirited and blue when it came, but your letters always cheer me up, and make me feel like another person. I would be so happy Love if only I could be with you, and I do hope it will not be long before you can send for me. Johnnie is not very well, but it is the warm weather and his teeth.

I told you in my last that I was going to a picnic. Well I went, and Johnnie enjoyed it so much, the day was cool, and the Park is so nice now, it was a real treat for our little Pet, and everybody noticed him so much. He is not afraid to talk to strangers, and when anyone would ask his name he would say Johnnie Benton, and then they would say, well Johnnie how old are you, and he would answer, two years. I wish you could hear him talk. The other day I was taking him down stairs, and he had his arms around my neck, and he said, Mama loves Johnnie too much.

He's such a Darling little Pet I don't know how I would get along without him.

I see they have the yellow fever again in Memphis, and expect much suffering there from it this summer.

Love, do you get the Omaha papers. Let me know, and if not I will send the Bee once in a while. I will close now, as have nothing to write, only this. KATE HAS GOT A NEW BEAU, a Mr. Lane, he seems like a very nice man, is about 35 years old I should judge, and is employed in the Singer Sewing Machine Co. so you see he is not rich.

Mrs. Cox applied and obtained a divorce from the "Captain." Well Darling I will close, hoping to hear from you soon and often with love and kisses from your two Pets,

I remain as ever

Your loving and faithful Wife Anna

* * *

Omaha, April 7th 1880

My Dear Sweetheart,

I received your letter and money order all right. Was much pleased to hear from you. I will use some of the money you sent me towards getting ready, but will have to pay my board and washing along, but this I can do very well until you send me more. I would not have to pay out the money now, for board, but Kate is still out of work, and needs it very much, so I will not ask her to wait.

Love, I see by the Evening Bee that you have been appointed at last, so now hope that you will not be long in sending for me [This "appointment" probably pertains to his later position of postmaster.] I do want to see you so badly

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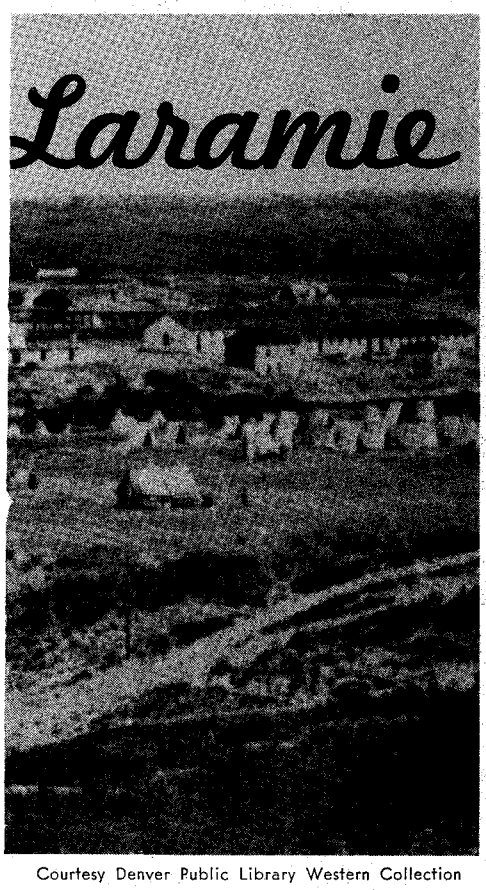
Love, and once more be with you, for can not feel it is right for us to live in this way, and now that you are sure of staying there, I don't see anything to prevent my being with you.

Helen went home today, and John had a good cry because he could not go with her. Helen thinks I have two very nice boys, Roy will be five months old tomorrow sweetheart. How much older do you think the little Pet will be before he can see his Papa?

have let the inkwell run
ove notes couldn't compete



Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Ft. Laramie in the late 1860s.

I expected a letter from you tonight but the western train did not get in, so hope I will not be disappointed tomorrow. I will now have to close for the baby is fretting, and it is very late, so must go to bed. Will you write a longer letter next time Love.

With much love and many kisses
I am
Your faithful and loving wife Anna

* * *

THE NEXT LETTER had been sealed with wax and postmarked from Virginia. Written in a precise, dignified script, it was from Matt's mother, dated June 1, 1880.

My Dear Matt, I need not attempt to express the pleasure we anticipated and now enjoy of having your wife and children with us. John is a perfect picture of what you were at his age and I do not think Roy quite so pretty but equally fine looking. John has ridden home with Max who is ploughing in the bottom of the orchard. The little fellow sees much to amuse him.

I have just gotten from Robs. His children have the measles to perfection. Annie has just received an invitation to dine at old Hartford with Willie and his wife. She will accept and some of us will go with her. You must excuse this note as Annie told me she has written you and I thought I would add a few lines. Will write again in a short time. The weather is oppressive. Write soon.

From your ever affect. Mother

* * *

Now a new feminine handwriting appears in Matt's correspondence. Written in purple ink on lined pale green paper, the words begin and end in a flourish.

* * *

Lusk, Wyo, June 28

Dear friend

Please forgive me for not writing and thanking you for the earrings. I am almost ashamed to write now after neglecting so doing but I thought they were lovely and they just suit me. and the pins I ware for lace pins.

Now I must tell you that they expect to have quite a time here on the fourth of July and we are going to have a nice dance in the evening. Wont you come. As Jim gives the ball I suppose he will be quite busy and will not have time to wait upon me very much. Perhaps if you come you would give me a little attention so I would not be quite neglected. I do so wish you would come think we will have a nice time.

Havent eny news to write and so will make my letter short. Try and come

Your little Friend Delia

* * *

In still another script was the next letter, also in a woman's handwriting.

Cheyenne Wyoming
July 31

My Dear Friend

I received your kind and welcome letter this morning and was very glad to hear from you. I looked for a letter Monday morning but did not get one and you cant imagine how lonely I felt after the mail carrier passed and there was no letters. For if I look for a letter and get disappointed I am homesick for two long days untill the next mail morning comes. But I got two this morning so that pays up for Monday morning.

O my Mr. Benton you cant imagine how happy I would be if I could see all you folks this evening. I get so lonesome sometimes I hardly know what to do with myself. I know I am foolish but when a person has been with a certain lot of people for six years and then go away where they know no one at all, it is awfull lonely for them. Although Mr and Mrs Culver are very good to me it is not like home folks.

I suppose you think I am never going to get that ring fixed or maybe you think I am going to keep it. But I am not. I don't think you are in a hurry for it and I go down town so little and when I do go I forget it but I will get it fixed before long.

In regard to the Photographs I have not had them taken. I dont think I will for a while but never mind, you shall have one when I do get them. I have to get me a dark dress made, as all my dresses are all very near white and I dont like to see a light picture.

You said I would get tired reading your letter. you are very much mistaken for I love to get such nice letters. every letter I get from home, that is I call that home for I have no other any more. I always have to cry and wish I could see who ever it may be from and talk to them. I can talk much better than I can write.

Now mr. Benton in regard to you coming down to Cheyenne don't come if it is to see me for I am afraid I could not see you. For if them folks should find out you came to see me they would make an awfull talk and I may take a notion to come back up there in a month or two. I am not going to apply for a divorce at all, for if I do Bill is going to appear against me and make it awfull hard for me. so I will leave it all to him and when he gets tired living a grass widower he will get a divorce himself and I can live a grass widow a few years I guess.

I hear him and Mrs. W. had made up. Oh isent that terrible to think they will do that, but they will get punished for it some time. The other night Mrs. C and I went down town and Mrs. Post gave a reception that night and some boys that wanted to be smart tied strings across the sidewalk for the folk that would come to the party. But instead of catching them they caught us and Oh you oght to seen our heads go back and we have laughed so much about it. the only good laugh I have had since I came down here.

Well I will close for this time hoping that you will answer soon like I have done, and tell me all the news and rest assured that I will not get tired of reading your letters for they are to nice

with love
from your true friend Minnie

WHERE is Anna? Does the absence of correspondence from her during this period mean that Matt had sent for her? Later letters prove that she did indeed spend some time with him at Fort Laramie, but it seems unlikely that she was there while Delia and Minnie were taking so much of Matt's attention. It is possible that some letters were destroyed. The next letter was again in purple ink on green paper.

Lusk Wyoming
May 4th
Sunday morning

Dear friend.

I received your letter also the flower seed all right. I think they were very nice and send many thanks for the same. I have got the sweet peas in the ground,

(Continued on page 56)

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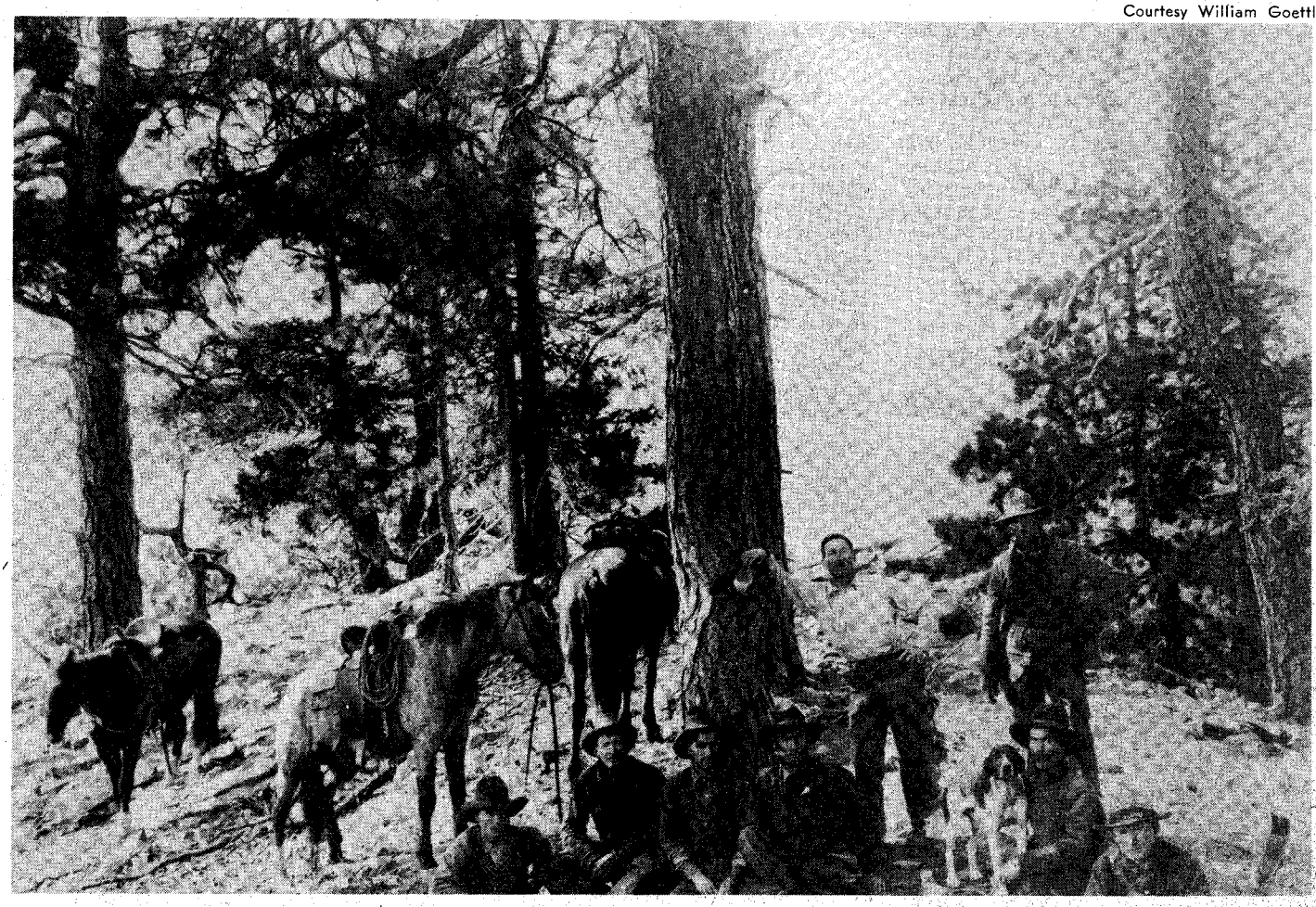
Courtesy William Goettl



A hunting party, of which Zane Grey and Sivert Nielsen were members, though they are not in this photo taken in the Tonto Basin of Arizona in 1918. Left to right: Louis Pyle, Lee Doyle, Ed Haught, Verde Haught, J. A. "Doc" Wilborn, Sid Boerstler, Ben Haught (with dog), and R. C. Grey, Zane's brother.

ZANE GREY'S MYSTERIOUS

When some men say goodbye, they mean it...

ONE PART of a two part, fifty-year-old mystery was solved when *Aftenposten*, Oslo, Norway's largest newspaper, ran an inquiry by me in 1972. I asked if anyone in Norway had ever heard of a prospector, hunter, and guide by the name of Sivert Nielsen.

Nielsen had been a close friend and guide for the famous Western writer, Zane Grey. In 1924, Nielsen disappeared after a nine-year friendship with Grey, who never saw him again. Grey felt that Nielsen had been murdered by revolutionaries in Tijuana, Mexico but died without ever finding out the true fate of his friend.

The newspaper inquiry resulted in a letter from Elisabeth Seeberg, a relative of Sivert Nielsen. She uncovered the first part of the mystery. She said Nielsen was her great-uncle, adding that he died August 8, 1960 at the Melling Ranch in Baja California. The second part of the mystery—why Nielsen chose to disappear—never has been solved.

Miss Seeberg stated that Sivert Nielsen was the grandson of one-time president of the Norwegian Parliament, also named Sivert Nielsen, and was a cousin of another Sivert Nielsen who was Norway's permanent delegate to the United Nations 1958-66. Of his three sisters and three brothers, one sister Borghild Owre, still lives. She resides in Alesund, Norway. Characteristically, Nielsen never mentioned the prominence of his grandfather to Grey, though Grey suspected that he came from a good family.

Sivert was born in Bodo, Norway on May 11, 1885. He was an adventurer from childhood, and challenged the wildest storms of the seas off northern Norway in a small, open sailboat. He graduated from navigation school when he was eighteen and emigrated to the United States.

The United States, however, was only a base from which he sailed the Seven Seas. This lasted until 1913 when the lure of gold drew him ashore in western Mexico, and with the exception of his years with Zane Grey in the United States, he lived in Mexico until his death.

TO THIS DAY no one knows why he walked away from his association with the famous author. Grey's son Romer, when informed that Nielsen did not die in Tijuana, expressed considerable interest in the fact. He also wonders what caused Nielsen to disappear. Romer had hunted as a lad in 1918 with his father and Nielsen. He recalled the guide as being a warm and personable man.

The two men met as the result of a letter Nielsen wrote to Grey in 1915 mentioning that he had read Grey's book, *Desert Gold*, in which Grey wrote of a lost gold mine. Nielsen told Grey that he had been prospecting since 1913 and had made four trips into the Sonora Desert (one of the most inhospitable lands on earth). Nielsen proposed that if Grey could give him some idea of the mine's

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general area, he would attempt to locate it and split the treasure with the author.

Grey was impressed by the well-written letter, and replied to Nielsen explaining that the lost mine was only a product of his imagination. The story was fiction. However, he invited Nielsen to visit him at his home in Avalon on Catalina Island, off the California coast.

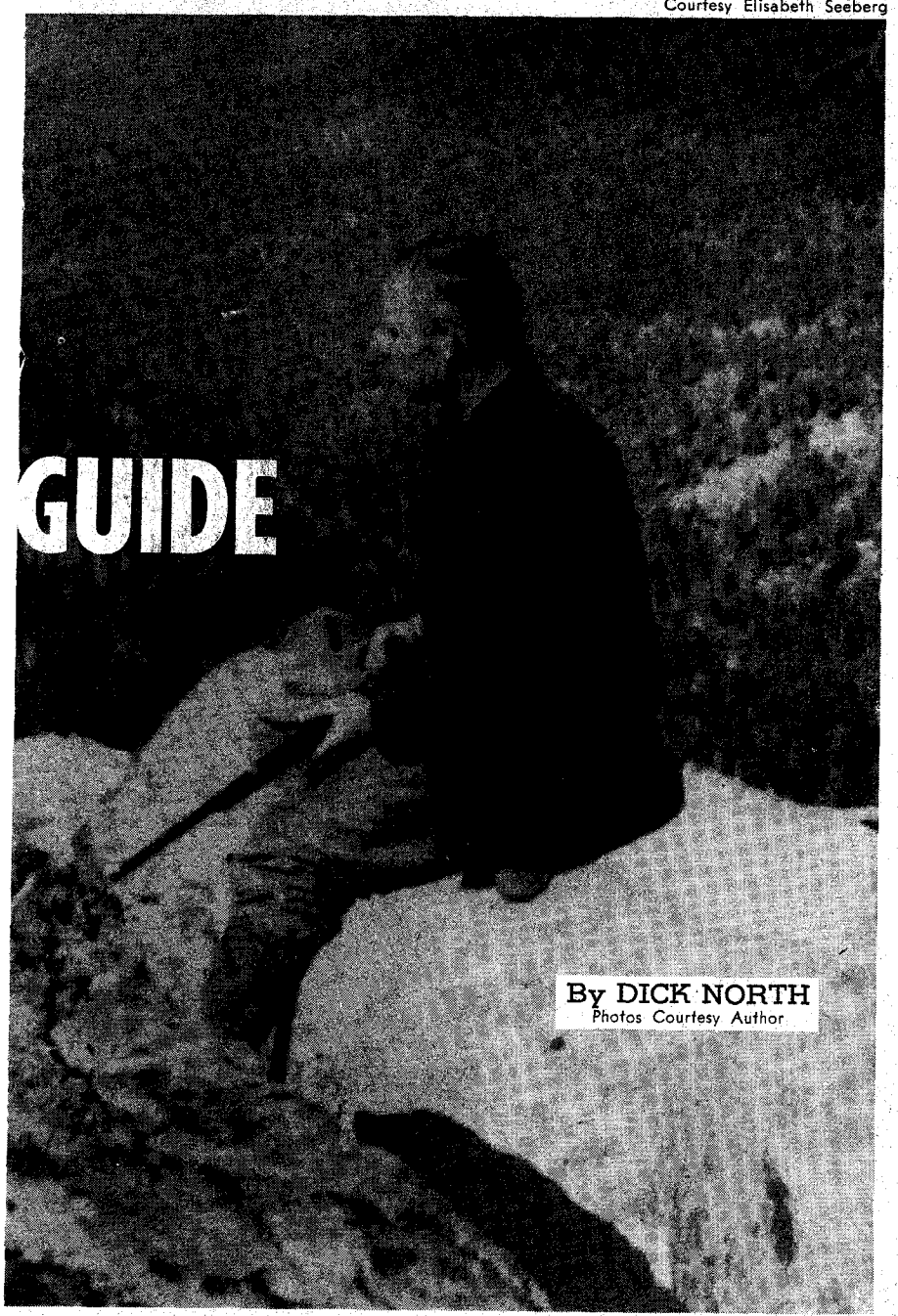
Zane Grey was even more impressed when he and Nielsen met. He described the man as being about thirty-five, with a magnificent physique, weighing about 190. His shoulders were so broad he did not look as tall as his five feet ten.

Shortly after their meeting, Nielsen joined Grey on several fishing trips which were a forerunner of the many Grey was eventually to make in earning the title of the number-one sports fisher-

Courtesy William Goettl

Above, getting the chuck wagon ready to head out. Left to right: Ben Haught, R. C. Grey, Takahashi (the cook, atop wagon), Lee Doyle, and Zane Grey (sitting on box). Below, Sivert Nielsen in Arizona, 1918.

Courtesy Elisabeth Seeberg



GUIDE

By DICK NORTH
Photos Courtesy Author

man in the world at that time. After the fishing trips Nielsen became a permanent guide for Grey.

Grey related some of the adventures of Nielsen in his book *Tales of Lonely Trails*. Grey mentions that Nielsen, while prospecting along Mexico's west coast, would walk along the beach at night at low tide so rising water in the morning would wash away his tracks. He did this to avoid the Seri Indians. On more than one occasion the Seris were known to have killed prospectors who ranged into their territory. This tribe was one of the few in North America known to have practiced cannibalism. Nielsen had once watched them from a hiding place as they devoured a raw and quite putrid turtle.

In another adventure related by Grey, Nielsen was prospecting in the desert when a couger killed his burro. He walked 150 miles to safety in three days while carrying only a canteen of water and a few biscuits.

Grey and his guide went on an extended hunting trip in the Tonto Basin country of Arizona in 1918. One day they attempted to drive a wagon over an abandoned wagon trail blocked by windfall timber. Said Grey: "Brawny Nielsen seemed ten men in one! What a swath he hacked with his big axe!"

On the same trip, quick thinking on Nielsen's part in cutting the harness of a horse gone berserk after an accident, saved several men in the party from being seriously injured.

SIVERT NIELSEN saved Zane Grey's life during a trip through Death Valley in 1919. Grey had put one foot through a salt crust over a sink-hole and was on the verge of breaking completely through when Nielsen snatched him back. If not for that quick action, many books found on library shelves throughout the world may never have been written.

Nielsen calmly looked into the acid-filled hole and remarked, "Forty feet from hell."

"The man courted peril," Grey said. "The bright face of danger must have been beautiful and alluring to him."

Tappan, the hero of Grey's story,

(Continued on page 57)

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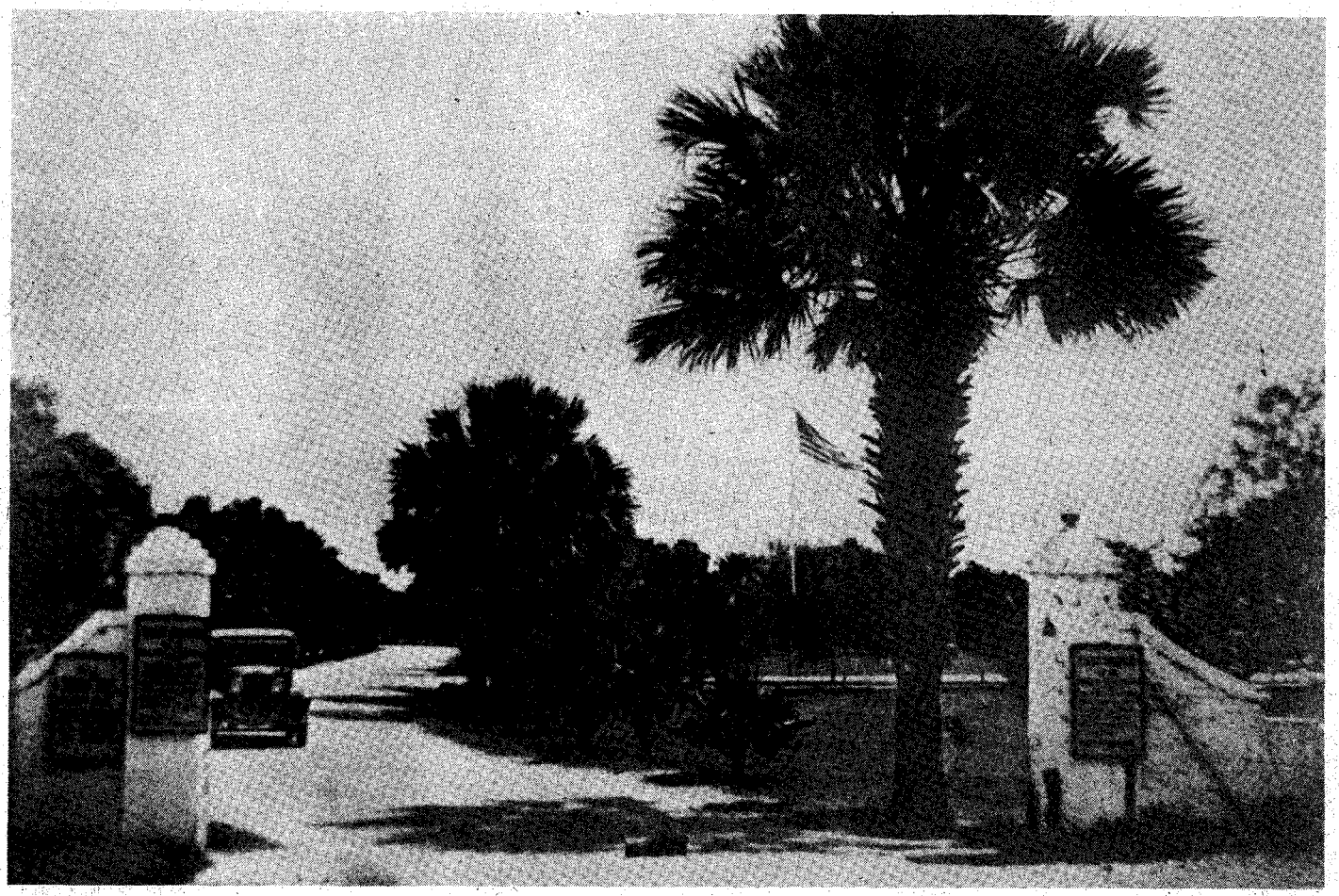


Above, the Elizabeth Street gate to Fort Brown, sometime in the '30s. The flag is in front of Headquarters, where the procession came out of the Post and went the one-and-a-half blocks to Battle Row.

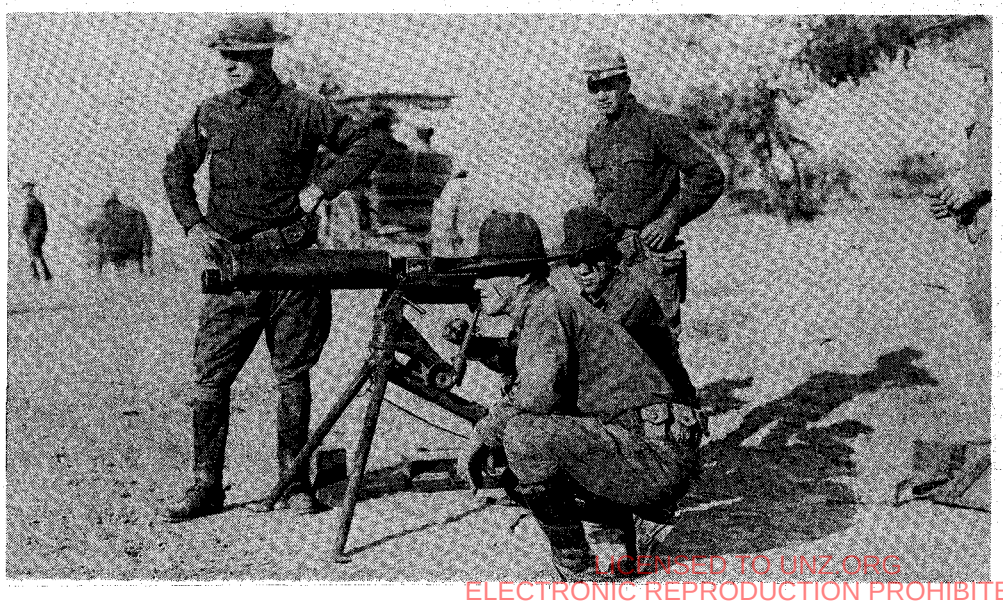
THE SOLDIER'S

Those killed in the Border fighting of 1915-16 were usually buried elsewhere—but before that four o'clock train pulled out, each soldier had a send-off that was truly unique

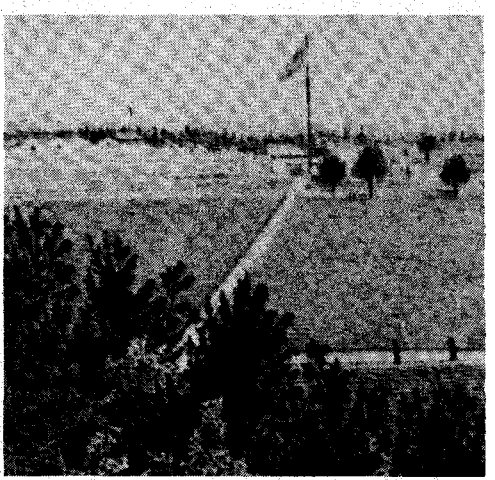
By FORD GREEN
Illustrations from Author's Collection

THE LAST genuine guerrilla war fought on American soil, probably occurred on the Mexican border in 1915. Here were soldiers who, though averaging only about thirty-five years, were almost all long-time professionals. The fit of the uniforms and their faded look (pale faded uniforms were preferred for dress occasions) showed that these men were not new enlistees or draftees. Walk-

A machine gun squad of U.S. troopers stationed along the U.S./Mexico border in early 1900s.



Below, the parade grounds and Officer's Row Building being the route of the funera



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ing down the street off post, in pairs or more, they kept in step with a swinging walk not seen in others. All had a brisk confidence that showed their years of training.

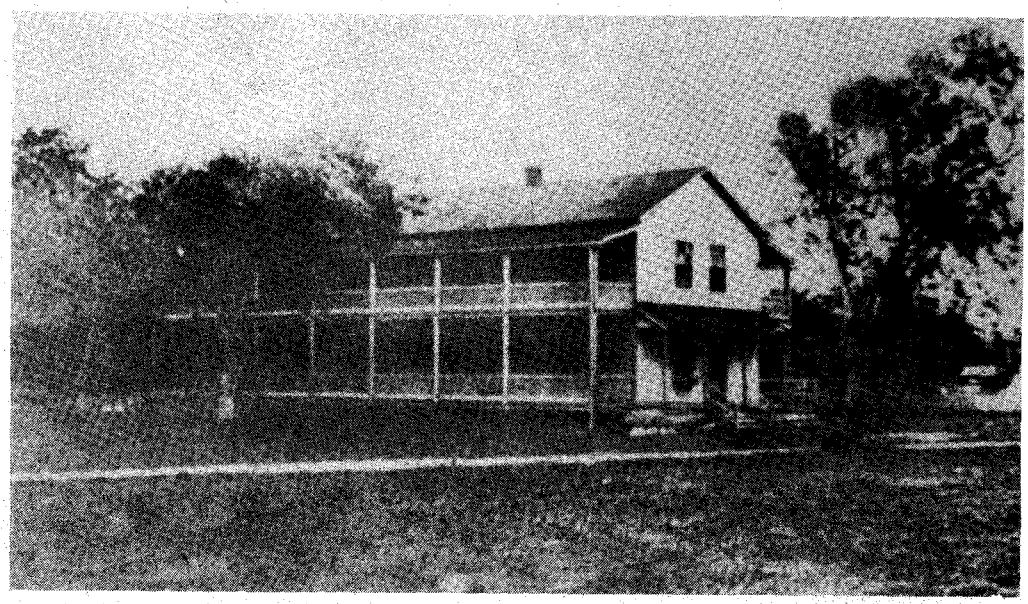
The 26th and 4th Infantry, particularly, portrayed the perfect soldierly type. It was a rare officer in these regiments who did not come up from the ranks. Probably the most humble were the West Pointers, for in a little time they came to realize the immense experience of the men and the other officers.

Here and there, were some soldiers of fortune like Major Sheppard Philpot who had gotten out of Mombassa at the end of the Boer fighting just two jumps ahead of the British. Another, "Old John," who had the papers to prove that he had enlisted in 1880. A good sprinkling had ribbons from the rounding up of the last of the Apaches in the late 1880s and early 1890s: Indian War ribbons. One trombone and tuba player in the band still had music in his bag that he played at the flag-raising in Santiago, Cuba in 1898. Almost every man had a tale to tell, or a tale told about him.

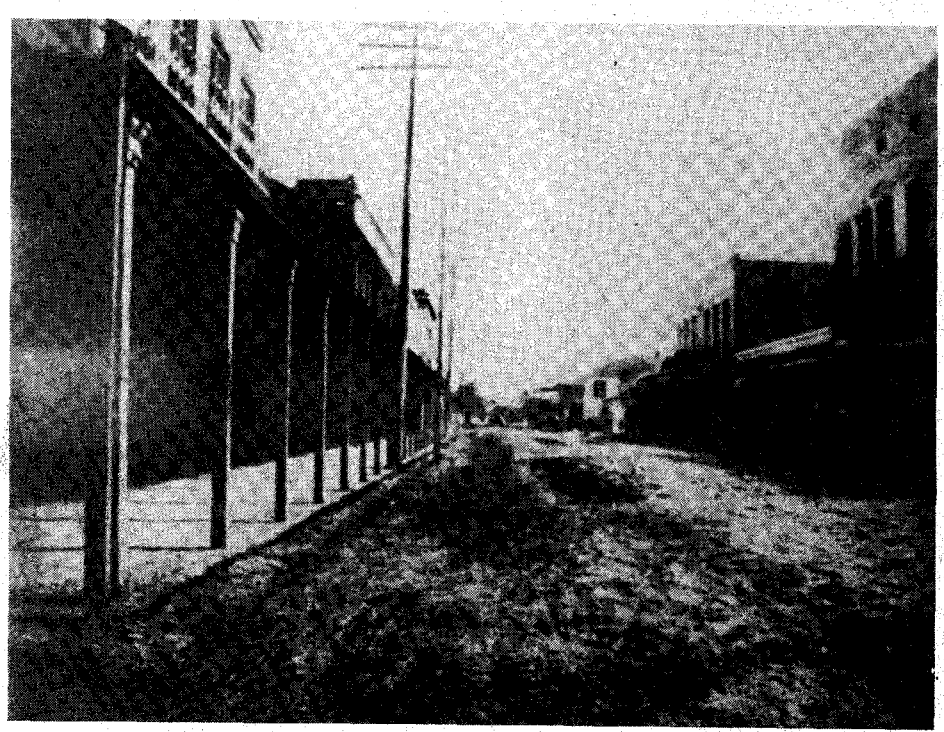
One, Captain John K. Cowan of K Co. of the 4th, had left West Point in his junior year in 1897 and had in some way become the Colonel and Chief of Staff of the Cuban revolutionary General Maximo Gómez, later becoming liaison as the Americans landed. Having enlisted back with the American Army as a private he had spent more than fifteen years working his way up to the rank of Captain. Now he had a company of men who had held stripes at one time or

FAREWELL

another in every kind of outfit, but had gravitated to this company on account of confidence in the commander, or through esteem for some other members of the company through long years of



Above, the barracks inside the Post gates. Below, Battle Row on a quiet afternoon.



th the road in front of the Headquarters
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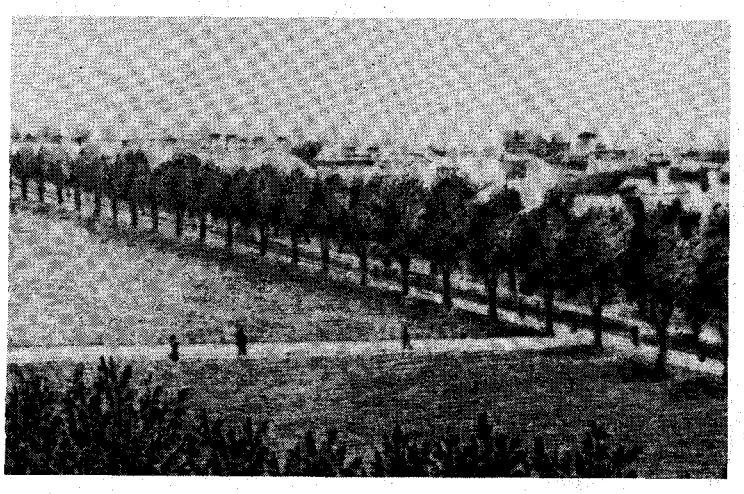
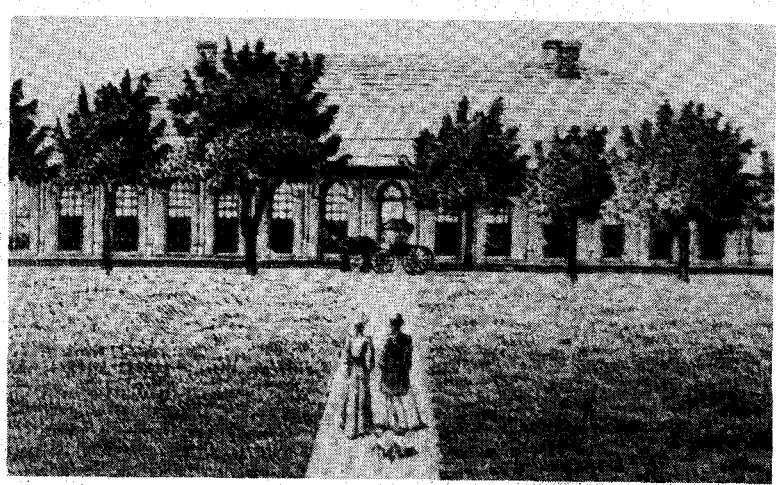
Below, the old Fort Brown Headquarters Building, now the Brownsville City Police Station.





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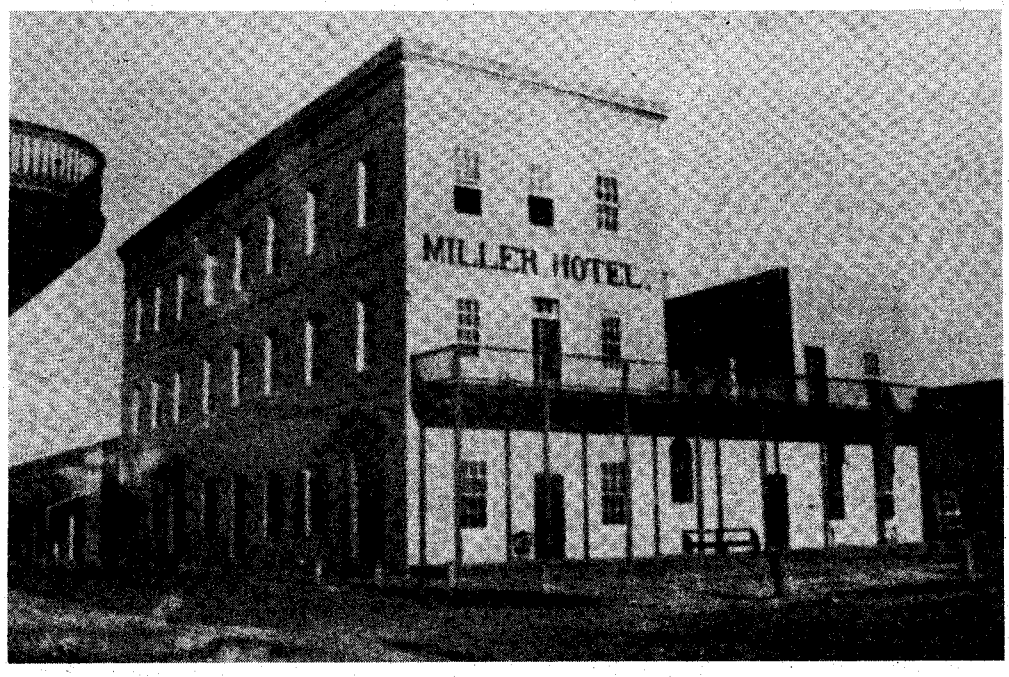

The Miller Hotel, just off Battle Row, was a popular stop for almost a century. It was demolished years ago.

acquaintance.

For the most part the men had service back to the Spanish-American War. They had been the ones who took part in the real fighting, who had continued in the service, and who had earned the term "professional soldier" by surviving their assignments in many parts of the world—the Philippines, and the Boxer trouble in China in 1900. These were the exotics of them all, except for the few who had served under foreign flags.

Every one of these soldiers had experienced vicious guerrilla brush-fighting, such as the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas was experiencing in 1915.

THESE were the men who were sent to guard the border. Many had been in the Vera Cruz occupation in April 1914 and they had already been introduced to Mexicans, who had invented a few new rules for the guerrilla game. Though based in Brownsville, they were scattered at small outposts over more than two hundred miles of border, with the more substantial forces opposite the Mexican bases of Matamoros, Reynosa, Camargo and Laredo. Usually the Mexican "bandits" raided in pairs to a dozen, sniping and ambushing, hit and run, almost daily. It was inevitable that a few American soldiers would be hit, and once in a while a man would get killed.

Brownsville was an old town for the "Valley" but not old compared with towns in northern Mexico. Buildings on Elizabeth Street had dates that went back to the boom times of the Civil War, when the town was the cotton lifeline of the South.

The block from 12th to 13th Streets on Elizabeth was the saloon line of the town. On the corner of 13th was the Western Union office. In the middle of the block was a shooting gallery, and on the corner of 12th Street, opposite Crixell's Saloon, was Johnny Rutledge's haberdashery. The rest of the block on both sides was solid saloons in the best tradition of the Old West. They were not wooden false-fronts, but good permanent brick buildings, with swinging doors and polished mahogany bars. In the upper stories of some were a few very inconspicuous ladies that the street rarely saw.

BY THE MIDDLE of the afternoon horses were tied to every post on the block and overflowing to the next ones. Every saddle had a holster for some kind of a firearm, mostly rifles, but a good percentage had shotguns and some even had shotguns in addition to the usual .30-30s. A few had gun-belts looped over the saddle horn, but most of the men preferred the old Colt single-action on the hip. Once in a while a dude might have a Smith & Wesson double-action, but these were very few.

On the street were a half dozen buggies and one surrey. All of the buggies except one had the tops down on this warm afternoon. A rifle or two lay on the seats. These were bandit days.

There were small groups of men talking in front of the bars, and others going in and out. Stetson hats of some type were almost universal, though some of the ranchers had silver-embroidered leather sombreros that had been gotten from the other side, years before, when things were friendly.

People had naturally gravitated this mid-afternoon to the main thoroughfare, Elizabeth Street. A couple of days before, a soldier had been killed in the Ojo de Agua fight, just out of Mission, and the night train had brought his body to Brownsville for official formalities.

Undertaker F. F. Morris had readied the Post Chapel for services which would be held before the four o'clock train pulled out. That time was rapidly approaching.

Captain John F. Chenoweth, the chaplain gave his usual touching sermon, though he was much younger than most of the men to whom he ministered. This

(Continued on page 60)

The Post chapel and theatre at Fort Brown, now part of Texas Southmost College.

Courtesy Texas Southmost College

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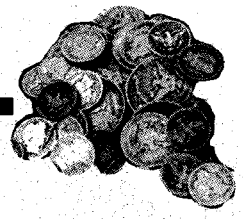
ONE MAN'S RUBBLE— ANOTHER MAN'S GOLD



By NAOMI HORNBERGER
Photos Courtesy Author

When the earth came apart in old San Francisco, men with strong backs and empty pockets headed for the ruined city...

EVEN BEFORE the charcoal stopped smoking in San Francisco in 1906, work started wherever public property required clearing for travel. Every man within call of the person superintending the work, or within reach of his pistol, was forced into service following the earthquake. Even the Secretary of State, Charles Forrest Curry, attempted to pass a crew of workers and was ordered to toss bricks until his identity was established. Men in sailboats in the bay were commandeered. Their expertise with ropes was needed to raise fallen telephone poles.

These involuntary workers were soon replaced after contractors posted ads in California newspapers for laborers and teamsters with horses and wagons to clean up debris. The wage scale paid by the contractors was hard for farmworkers to resist.

A group of robust young farm hands, faces weatherbeaten, hands calloused from long hours of plowing grain fields and herding cattle, responded to the promise of gold in San Francisco's rubble. These men were sons of pioneer farmers in the Sacramento Valley Nye District.

Theodore Biggs' eldest son, Charles, was the unquestionable leader of the group. Beneath the surface of this quiet young man with unruly blonde hair and kindly light blue eyes, was a granite-like will. It was his perseverance that overcame family opposition to answering the contractors' call. And it was he who got together a crew, beginning with his brother. "Aw, come on, Joe, go with us," pleaded Charly. "Pop said he could spare a wagon and team."

George Yost (left) and Charly Biggs.

"All right, I'll go," Joe answered peevishly, "provided Uncle Lew lets Sam have a rig so each family has its own outfit." (Sam was Lewis Biggs' son and Joe's and Charley's cousin.)

"Ride down to Uncle Lew's, then, and find out," Charly ordered, grabbing his hat. "I'll head for the Yosts and find out if those fellas are going." (George Yost later married Annie Biggs.)

The Yost boys—Willfred, George, and Jack—did go; and they also persuaded Chuck Cole, the proud owner of a pair of mules, and his pardner Ray Shaver to join them. This made, at least in theory, a three-part crew.

Charly rustled around and with little or no expenditure managed to acquire three tents, a cook stove, bedding, provisions, and hay for the horses.

Before dawn the day of departure, they hitched the horses and Chuck's mules to the loaded wagons, then drove at a trot over the rutty dirt roads to the Sacramento River.

Moored to the docks was a clumsy old square steamer, with stern paddle-wheel and double smokestacks, on which they had booked passage. Black-mustachioed Italian stevedores, their muscular bodies apparent beneath tight-fitting garb, gave animated directions as to the space each rig was to occupy.

"Hamming it up" at the campsite are (from left): Joe Biggs, Jim Biggs, George Yost, Charly Biggs, and Jack Yost. Their wagons and teams are in the background.

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The trip down the river and across the bay was without incident except for the animals being a little skittish. After disembarking, it took the boys until almost dark to locate their campsite.

"George, help me unload the stove, will ya, so you can start supper," Charly yelled from his wagon.

"Oh, pshaw, I can't cook. Jack can do it," George Yost complained.

"Oh no, I can't," retorted his brother. "You know how. You've helped Maw cook for the hands. I'll light the lanterns, though, and get out the grub boxes."

"Ray, help me unhitch the wagons," said Chuck Cole. "Then we'll feed and water the teams."

"Good idea," agreed Charly. "Joe and I will pitch tents while supper's cookin'."

"I'll unload the bedrolls," volunteered Willfred Yost, "then spread 'em in the first tent up."

"Hey, George," Sam yelled. "I'll peel the spuds for ya—I'm starved!"

George was a little more resigned to his job as a fulltime cook when he was chosen to negotiate with the contractor and take charge of the payroll. In time they hired a cook, and George joined the cleanup crew.

JAMES BIGGS, Sam's brother, already in San Francisco attending dental college, joined the crew on a part-time basis. Though considered a "city-slicker" by his cousins, he proved by shouldering his share of work that he had not forgotten his boyhood training.

Helping save San Francisco was fast becoming a family affair. Another brother, a surveyor for the United States Geological Survey, was ordered by the government to deliver tents to victims of the fire and earthquake.

A sister, Annie Biggs, was in nurse's training at Stanford Lane Hospital. Annie's petite figure and frail appearance belied the enormous physical stamina she exhibited while on duty. After the earthquake struck, she administered first aid to the injured, then later accompanied her patients when they were transferred to the Presidio.

On Saturdays, dressed in their Sunday best, the farm boys boarded the cable car, their destination the Cliff House, one of the recreation spots unharmed by the earthquake.

Cliff House Hotel, a chateau-like structure, had been rebuilt by Adolph Sutro after fire had destroyed the original building in 1894. In its heyday it was characterized by just enough notoriety to lend it enchantment as a rendezvous.

During weekend breaks, the boys kept their ears open for any opportunity that would produce a profit. One Saturday it was rumored that the San Francisco zoo would pay generously for wild animals.

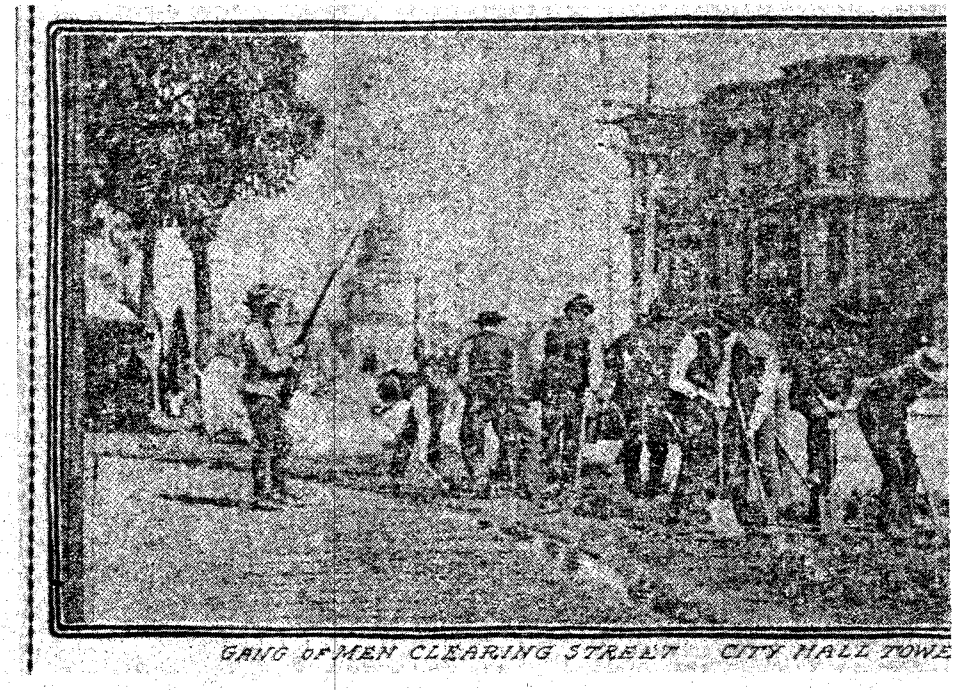
"By golly, fellas, I'll bet we could get a pretty penny for those bears we got at home," exclaimed Willfred.

"Now, don't go gettin' any harebrained idea of goin' after 'em," Charly answered quickly. "You know we can't spare a man, let alone a rig."

"I'll tell ya what," Willfred said, "George and I can make a fast trip home

PHOTOGRAPH OF THE RUINS OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC OF THE ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL ON JULIAN AVENUE.

Photos Above and Below Courtesy Hollis L. Hicklin, Republic of Panama



GANG OF MEN CLEARING STREET CITY HALL TOWE

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ROAD HOSPITAL AT FOURTEENTH AND MISSION STREETS, AND RAILROAD HOSPITAL IS TO THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE.

← The San Francisco Examiner, Thursday, May 3, 1906

and get the bears, and any money lost while we're gone we'll divvy up out of our own pocket." Finally Charly agreed, and the next day Willfred and George headed for the docks at a trot.

The two 150-pound bears, tethered in their back yard at home, had been captured the previous summer at Ice House in the Sierras where the Yosts had taken their cattle to graze. Though transported in hastily improvised cages, they posed no problem until their arrival at the dock. There the waterfront was in a frenzy of early morning activity. Steamer stacks belched black billows of smoke, blasts of passing tugboats pierced the air, and the loud rumbling of loaded horse-drawn drays on the cobblestone street was deafening.

Accustomed to the quiet countryside, the frightened bears growled ferociously, and frantically clawed their cages in an effort to escape. The Yost brothers sought out the steamer captain, vouched for their charges' good behavior during the trip, and were allowed to bring them aboard.

The temperamental stevedores, however, when confronted with the two wild beasts, made a hasty retreat to the other side of the steamer, gesturing and protesting in Italian.

The zoo paid the Yost boys fifty dollars for the two bears, which amply compensated for their absence.

IN the first year and a half after the earthquake, thousands of horses were worked to death. The S.P.C.A. wagon worked three shifts a day to cart off dead animals. Rufus Steele wrote in 1909: "On lower Market Street somewhere, an equine statue should be erected to the memory of the fifteen thousand four-legged heroes whose ex-

(Continued on page 60)

The Bulletin, April 28, 1906.

In their Sunday best at Cliff House are (from left in back row): Ray Shaver, Willfred Yost, and Sam Biggs. In front row: Charly Biggs, Joe Biggs, and Chuck Cole. Note mural of Cliff House in background.

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Wild Old Days!

From **Panhandle Pilgrimage: Illustrated Tales Tracing History in the Texas Panhandle**, by Pauline Durrett Robertson & R. L. Robertson, Paramount Publishing Co., Amarillo, Texas.

THE SANDSTORM

By James A. Fox

IT WAS a beautiful morning in early spring. The sun had not yet risen and the sky was a clear blue, turning to a soft pink in the eastern sky. But already mirages had begun to appear on the northern, western and southern horizon, a very good sign of an approaching sandstorm.

When the sun was up and had not had time to evaporate the moisture and dry the air, the mirages were clearly defined. There were lakes of clear blue water, many tall buildings, trees, and mountains as one looked across the flat prairie as far as the eye could see. Not a breath of air was moving.

A little later in the day the wind began to be restless—nothing to be alarmed about, just a hard puff from one direction, than a calm, then a puff from another direction as if it couldn't decide what it wanted to do.

By nine o'clock it had settled down to blowing steadily from the west. A few specks of clouds appeared on the western rim, just tiny at first but very quickly growing in size and moving at an enormous rate of speed.

Who would have thought those tiny specks would grow until they covered the whole of the sky and, together with the dust, would blot out the sun and make the whole world dark?

The sand began to pick up in the fields until the whole earth seemed to be shifting from west to east. Tumbleweeds were rolling and breaking down the fences.

As the wind blew harder it howled around the eaves of the house like the lonesome cry of a coyote. By ten o'clock it had developed into a full-fledged West Texas sandstorm. The sky grew darker as the wind gained momentum. Soon the thick choking dust reduced the sun to just a dull glow.

AN EERIE FEELING crept over the land, a stifling, sickening feeling that only those who have experienced it can understand.

By noon the storm had reached its peak. A seventy-mile-an-hour straight wind, harder in gusts, had slipped down the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains and roared acrosss the dry dusty plains.

We had by then reached zero visibility. There wasn't even a hint of where the sun might be in the sky. Lamps had to be lit in the house but they seemed to give only a haze of light.

All day we stayed inside hoping that by nightfall the wind might calm so we could feed the livestock. It is usual, in that country, for a sandstorm to cease blowing at sundown, and during the night the air will free itself of the dust and produce a beautiful morning.

This one was different in that the calm came for only a short time, then the storm resumed with new fury.

The wire fences were charged with static electricity and after dark, at every splice in the wire, streams of fire could be seen jumping off the ends. A gate with tall steel posts tied together at the top would occasionally spit a stream of fire from one post to the other.

All night the wind tore at the window screens with no sign of stopping. We dampened sheets to put over the beds and wet handkerchiefs to spread over our faces, but we could feel the sand crawl down our neck and slip under the covers.

Morning was even more ominous. A howling sound echoed across the empty plains—a universe of swirling dust. Black silt, that again blotted out the sun, was seeping through every wall and window. It was easy to pick up a handful of sand from the bed sheets and to leave footprints on the floor.

Near noon time, as we raked the dust out of the pots and pans and prepared to fix our first meal since the sandstorm began, the wind seemed to blow harder.

The horses and cows hovered near the barns and bunched up on the leeward side of any protection they could find. The chickens never left the henhouse, but stayed on the roost all day because of the darkness.

To touch a horse's mane meant a lively shock and it was almost impossible to open a car door because of static electricity. Any car that moved would have to have a chain tied to it, touching the ground.

Later in the evening clouds began to appear. Then a monstrous one, possibly 50,000 feet high and so wide it filled the sky, blotted out all light. We were in pitch darkness long before it was time for the sun to go down.

Thunder rolled and there was almost a constant stream of lightning, but no rain came to settle the dust. Another night of choking and coughing was before us.

RAIN came before daybreak. We awoke to a beautiful world. The air was completely free of dust and so calm the windmills didn't make a single revolution throughout the day.

Of course, the fields looked hopeless—a pile of sand head high, and then a place blown out to the solid red clay, then another pile of sand and another spot blown out in holes.

Roads were head high in sand drifts, and one place that had no protection was blown out completely as though a river had run across it. Many roads were rendered useless for a long time.

I have seen sandstorms of greater intensity but of shorter duration, and I have seen sandstorms of longer duration but less intensity during my years on the Staked Plains, but all in all I believe this one which occurred over forty years ago was the most frightening and the most destructive. Our nearest town was Lamesa.

I have been lost in a sandstorm less than a quarter of a mile from home and almost perished. I might have missed the house by only a few feet had not my mother, as she usually did during a snowstorm or sandstorm when someone was out, placed a light in the window.

I have seen the plains in all their glory, the most beautiful place on earth at times when the season is right. I have seen that soil kick out two bales of cotton per acre and the best grain sorghum that grows anywhere, but I have also seen it when it looked like the whole thing wasn't worth fifteen cents.

As the old-timers used to say, "This ground can promise more and give less or promise less and give more than any other land on earth."

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LAND OF THE RED MAN

By Marjorie Howard

THINGS began to change in Indian Territory on April 22, 1889. The unassigned land in its center was opened to white settlement. This first "Oklahoma Run" with its multitude of covered wagons, horseback riders, mules, carriages and passengers on the Santa Fe Railroad is well known.

From time to time more land was made available to the white people by Congress. Finally individual allotments were made to each of the Indians, with the remaining unassigned land being bought by the Federal Government, some of it for as little as fifteen cents an acre. This same land about 1910 was selling for $10 and $15 an acre. By 1920 it advanced to $20 an acre. In 1945 it was up to $30 an acre. During the 1970s it is priced at $400 an acre.

Joseph F. Pettiner was only fifteen years old when the first Run was made in 1889. He lived in Coffeyville, Kansas only about five or six miles from the Indian Territory line. Indians were frequent visitors to Coffeyville in those early days. The discovery of oil in northeastern Indian Territory in 1890 increased interest in the area, but little or no development was started until 1903.

When Oklahoma became a state on November 16, 1907, Pettiner was raising cattle and shipping them to the Kansas City market each fall. He made trips into Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma each spring to buy calves to fatten on native grass for the shipment to Kansas City each fall. His wife taught school. Her ambition was to buy or build a permanent dwelling.

Shortly after Oklahoma was given statehood, a man Pettiner knew in the cattle business got into financial trouble. He had to sell his lovely home not far from where the Pettiners lived with their young daughter. A loan was negotiated and Mrs. Pettiner's dream house was a reality, but not for long. It was decided to let a good, high rent-paying bachelor tenant, who occupied a small part of the large home during the former owner's residency, continue to live there to help with expenses while a few minor repairs were being made.

ABOUT the time the family planned to move in, Pettiner was approached by a part-Indian wanting to trade him a half-section of fine Oklahoma grassland for the dream home. Pettiner thought it was too good an offer to turn down.

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph F. Pettiner's wedding photo, taken in Coffeyville, Kansas on April 30, 1896.

Photo Courtesy Author

The range he acquired was in the former Indian Territory, now Nowata County. Indians still lived on most of the surrounding land on their allotments. The couple was torn between feeling that they had made a good investment, and regret in giving up the home both had wanted so long. After the trade was made Pettiner continued to buy cattle and to pasture them in summer on his new range. The native grass was so dense and abundant by fall that there was enough left to cut for hay. He was always very careful not to overpasture his land.

There was only one problem—finding a place to store his hay until it was sold or used.

"I'd build a hay barn," he told his wife, "but I hate to go so much in debt."

However the barn was built. During haying time that fall, fortune smiled on the Pettiners. The weather remained bright and sunny and the cut hay dried to a lovely green in the warm sun. It was baled and put out of the weather.

"It's No. 1 prairie hay. It will bring top price," he said one night soon after the haying was over and the hay was stored. "Soon we'll be able to pay off all we borrowed on the barn."

"But sometimes doesn't the hay heat cause a spontaneous combustion?" worried Mrs. Pettiner.

"Yes, but we've been through that. This hay was thoroughly dried. And it was stored with plenty of ventilation."

Around midnight a few nights later the phone rang. A white settler in the Indian community where the ranch was located was calling.

"This is Pen Rogers," the man said, "I'm calling to tell you your new barn and all your hay has been set afire. A few of the Indians have tried to burn out all the white people who have bought land in their area [the former reservation]. They feel it's still their land—even if some of the Indians did sell out to whites."

"Thank you for calling," Pettiner choked. "Is anything left? Should I come down tonight?"

"No. It's beyond saving. The flames even now reach high into the sky."

Years have passed since this nightmare experience happened to my parents. Even as a young girl I sensed the panic and loss they felt. I never forgot their anguish.

Papa's early-day experience was repeated many times in the new state of Oklahoma by Indians who felt they had been betrayed and who sought revenge by burning and stealing from newcomers who they felt were illegally occupying their land. If we remember the many times the Indians were moved from one section to another and lastly to the Indian Territory where it was thought the land was no good and the white man would never want it, even the hard-hearted cannot help feeling sympathy for them.

Yet seeing the great loss and injustice done to my parents who were in no way responsible for the Indians' plight, it has taken me a lifetime to understand and forgive.

(Continued on next page)

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GHOST STORY

By Lenora P. Gilkey

DURING 1909 my parents lived in a former road house on a riverbank near the confluence of the Tuolumne and San Joaquin Rivers in a wild and picturesque area of central California. The eerie sounds and strange events that took place during our residence there can only be described as ghostly.

In 1852 a pioneer Stockton innkeeper named G. D. Dickenson built a two-story hotel and ferry on the Tuolumne, an establishment long remembered as Dickenson's Ferry. It was on the known route to the mines of the southern Mother Lode and the river crossing was essential. California was then only two years old as a state, gold had been discovered but three years past, and a rough and lawless rabble were frequent users of the accommodations. (This inn is well documented in California history. Gallant Duncan Dickenson constructed the first brick house in Monterey in 1847. He died in 1870, leaving sons.)

By the time of my family's residence there in 1909, nothing remained excepting the abandoned hotel and a sizeable "Boot Hill" a short way up the riverbank. Legends were told of travelers waylaid and of bar-room killings. A short time after my parents moved there, a man rode his horse to the riverbank at nightfall. The horse bent to drink, at which moment an unknown sniper shot the rider from his saddle.

In this era, range land was often partly underwater from the flooding rivers and was used by the vast Miller & Lux ranches for grazing herds of semi-wild cattle. The abandoned hotel was used as a cow camp for their often semi-wild *vaqueros*. Cattle rustling was rampant. Men who sold stolen beef to the San Francisco market had only to approach the animals by boat in the many deep sloughs under cover of undergrowth or darkness, shoot a fat steer and escape by water, a night's journey to the city by the Golden Gate.

My father, a cowboy, was sent with Mother and me to tend this camp. Only a part of the building was occupied. The closed-off bar-room was chipped with bullet holes, and dark bloodstains were still visible on the worn floor. My parents used the former dining room for living and cooking, with a small room under the front stairway for a bedroom. Upstairs were four bedrooms, with a minimum of old furniture. Traveling cowboys occasionally slept there.

Shortly after the move to Dickenson's Ferry, one night my parents heard the front door open. There were sounds of boots climbing the stairs and within moments bedsprings creaked as a late-coming cowboy retired for the night. Next morning Mother cooked breakfast. When no one had arisen by the time the food was ready, Father went upstairs to wake the guest. No one was there and no one had been there.

Two or three more times my parents were puzzled in the same way. Father began making certain the front door was well bolted from within. Still, every week or two the same sounds were repeated. Father began taking a lantern, after hearing such noises, to search the upstairs, still believing that someone was playing tricks on him. He even counted the number of stairs. The count coincided with the number of footsteps.

Another unexplained sound occurred regularly at night in the small bedroom under the stairs. It was the whirring sound of wings, as from a large flock of birds sweeping low. This was so realistic my parents often ducked their heads in the startled belief that something would strike them.

Father had two dogs. During the time we lived there, they refused to stay or sleep anywhere near the old house after dusk. When tied, they cried and howled in terror. Let loose, they went half a mile up the riverbank where they spent their nights on top of a haystack.

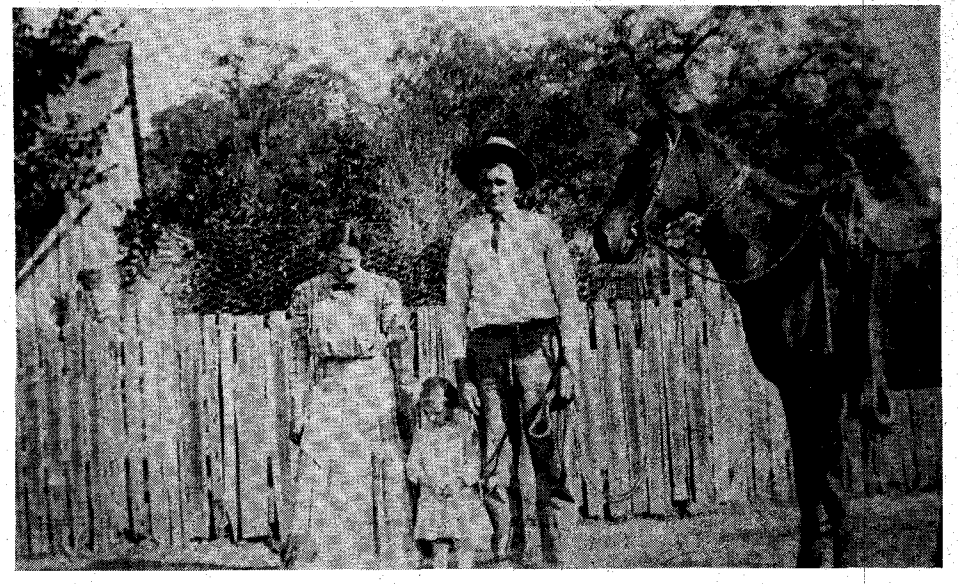
After a year it was necessary to leave this isolated area because Mother was expecting another child. An old cowboy who could no longer take hard riding asked if he could batch there, but he left hurriedly in the middle of his second night.

In my adult years I became acquainted with a Mexican *vaquero* named Modesto Vasquez who had traveled by wagon, as a child with his family, on the old trail past Dickenson's Ferry in the late years of the past century. He told of their night camp which had been made at roadside near the abandoned hotel. Late at night all were awakened by the sound of a runaway team, dragging its harness. The parents caught up the children and ran to escape being trampled. The sounds passed over their campsite but no animals appeared.

The ferry is only a memory. The hostelry burned long ago. The country is divided between stock range and prime farmland. Often I wonder if the unexplained manifestations, once so prevalent, still pervade that beautiful and once lonely land.

Jim Parsons with wife and daughter in 1910, one year after the strange happenings at the road house.

Photo Courtesy Author



THE COZZENS' HOUSE

A favorite story of early Omaha is that of the building of the Cozzens' House by George Francis Train to spite the management of the noted Herndon House. In October 1898, the Omaha (Nebraska) *World Herald* carried an interview with Dr. Harry A. Hibbard, of Herman, Missouri, who had worked at the Cozzens' House in 1867.

"Those were great days, in 1865-8 in Omaha. I was chief clerk in the Cozzens' House, corner Ninth and Harney Streets. The house still stands, and is now used for a theological seminary. That house was put up in sixty days, and was a wonder and admiration of the day. . . . The great and only George Francis Train was in the city at that time, and was making money. He furnished much if not all the cash for this, then great, hotel. That corner was lively then—that being the heart of the city. Workmen were in demand; very ordinary mechanics were getting $2, $3, $4 per day, and every man who could drive a nail was put to work. Omaha was on a tremendous boom.

"Well, the house was finished, and one of the features of it was a gas generating plant. Somebody had invented a thing of some kind to light houses, and Mr. Train bought the inventor out and he put a plant in the Cozzens. . . . It was at last in working order; we were impatient to light the thing. I was in the barroom, and at 8 o'clock on that beautiful September evening in 1867, the gas was touched off. There was an immense throng of people about the house. . . . I touched the gas jet and it made a fine light. The great crowd was delighted. . . . The house presented a beautifully brilliant appearance.

"Two or three days later, the time came for the grand opening. It was to be a gorgeous blow-out; guests were present from all parts of the country. Army of-

(Continued on page 43)

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

ATTENTION

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DYKES ANTHOLOGY

Nearly every collector of Western books knows the name Jeff Dykes. He's one of the nation's best-known Western Americana booksellers. Before he became a bookseller about a decade ago, he had spent much of his life collecting Western writings and illustrations, building the largest privately owned collection of Ranger books and a choice and inclusive collection of the writings of the late Texas author, J. Frank Dobie, a longtime personal friend. In 1966, the late Earl Rudder, president of Texas A & M, Dykes' alma mater, assigned him the task of building the college range-livestock library into the best collection of its kind. This Dykes did, and in May 1971 he presented the five-thousandth item to the collection. As many readers of this column know, Jeff Dykes originated The Old Bookaroos along with Fred Renner and the late Bill Allred. Now Old Bookaroo Dykes, already the author of several books, including the highly praised *Fifty Great Western Illustrators*, has pulled together a fascinating collection of bibliographic profiles of published Western Americana. The book is titled *Western High Spots* (Northland Press, P. O. Box N, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001, $12.50). Anyone who has ever read a book on the American West or viewed with interest a Western illustration will find much interest and pleasure in this effort. Dykes, who lives in College Park, Maryland, has selected 15 of his best writings on such subjects as book collecting, Western illustrating, Western books (nonfiction and fiction) and book dealers. And he includes three fascinating chapters on the rarities of J. Frank Dobie, Frederic Remington and Charles Russell. This illustrated book —192 pages—is not only delightful reading but a helpful guide to collecting Western Americana. It is, as the publisher notes, "a most significant addition to American literature, art and Western reference libraries."

INDIAN LIFE

In 1975 William W. Savage, Jr., a history professor at the University of Oklahoma, edited *Cowboy Life: Reconstructing an American Myth.* Now, he has produced a companion volume entitled *Indian Life: Transforming an American Myth* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma 73069, $9.95). Savage has chosen selected writings by thirteen persons who lived during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Like his earlier book, Savage covers the period from just after the Civil War to the early 1900s. The titles of the book's thirteen chapters give a hint to the characterizations of Indians included. For instance, Richard Irving Dodge's writings in chapter one are entitled "He remains a savage simply from lack of a code of morals," and Charles Alston Messiter's material in chapter four is labeled, "Indians never spare anyone who is in their power." But Helen Hunt Jackson's writings—chapter nine— are entitled, "Here is a picture of a helpless people!" It's an interesting book and presents the conflicting images that related to American Indians during the era covered. These images, as Savage points out, were later reinforced by motion pictures, novels and television, and some of them, unfortunately, exist today.

20th CENTURY WEST

Gerald D. Nash's *The American West in the Twentieth Century* (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, N. M. 87131, $5.95 paper) is a contemporary book on the West. Nash examines what has happened in the American West since the late 19th century and how change has affected the people of the region. He has divided his book into two parts. The first 188 pages of 311 cover the period from 1898 until 1941 and includes the growth before World War I, the period before the Depression, and the Depression era. Part Two extends through 1971. Nash points out that the underlying theme of the development of the 20th century West "is one of rapid growth—of the cities as well as less populated areas." He explores the nature of that growth, how people went West and why and what life-styles they adopted, the changes they wrought in exploiting the economy. It is a thoughtful book about the rich heritage of the contemporary American West.

WESTERN ENCYCLOPEDIA

If you ask 200 experts on various aspects of the American West to sit down at their typewriters or pick up their pens and write about the Old West, you can't help but accumulate a vast and diverse amount of interesting material. And if you have Howard R. Lamar, the William R. Coe professor of history at Yale University, edit the material, you can't help but have a fascinating book. That's what you'll find in *The Reader's Encyclopedia of the American West* (Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 10 East 53rd St., New York, N. Y. 10022, $24.95). This huge 1,306-page effort is, according to the publisher, "the first encyclopedia devoted to the American West." There are more than 2,400 entries, each of which is really an article. Most are many paragraphs in length. There are articles on exploration, discovery, trade, commerce, arts, languages, politics, historic sites and events, geography and law and order. There are accounts of the lives of lawmen and outlaws and even articles on ethnic, religious and racial groups. The book is illustrated and follows a two-column page format. It is comprehensive in nature. And whether you have a casual or serious interest in the American West, you'll find this effort worthy of a spot on your library bookshelf. It's not only a handy reference but good reading.

BRAZOS RIVER COUNTRY

If you're searching for a good book to provide escape from the problems of modern civilization, John Graves' *Goodbye To A River* (University of Nebraska Press, 901 N. 17th St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588, $3.95 paper) is just what the doctor ordered. It's one of those books where the author relates a warm and relaxed story sprinkled with Indian and pioneer lore and his own observations. Graves, in his narrative, returns to the scenes of boyhood experiences on a three-week canoe trip down about 200 miles of the Brazos River in Texas. Graves catches the flavor of life in Somervell, Hood, Park and Palo Pinto Counties. This reprint of the 1959 edition includes such passages as: "I saw my first deer of the trip there in the morning, a medium-sized buck in the cedars above camp where I went to get wood. He coughed at me before I saw him, and I ducked down to glimpse him beneath low-hanging branches as he ran off, flag high. The season would open in three days, but not for a lone man with one average stomach. . . ." Graves' narrative reminds one of Thoreau's "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," yet it is Texian through and through. It's good to see the book in print again.

LAST COWBOY?

It all started when Jane Kramer was sent to Texas by the *New Yorker* magazine to do a story. She took her daughter with her. It was there in the Texas Panhandle that she met Henry "Hank" Blanton and his family. Blanton stood out from the other cowboys she met. "There was something about him that moved me, and afterwards I sought him out, not really knowing why." The result of that meeting is Jane Kramer's *The Last Cowboy* (Harper & Row, Publishers, 10 East 53rd St., New York, N. Y. 10022, $8.95). It is the story of Hank Blanton. "He had settled into his life, but he could not seem to settle for it. He moved in a kind of deep, prideful disappointment. He longed for something to restore him—a lost myth, a hero's West. He believed in that West, no matter how his cowboy's life, and the memory of his father's and grandfather's cowboy lives, conspired to disabuse him," wrote Jane Kramer. This

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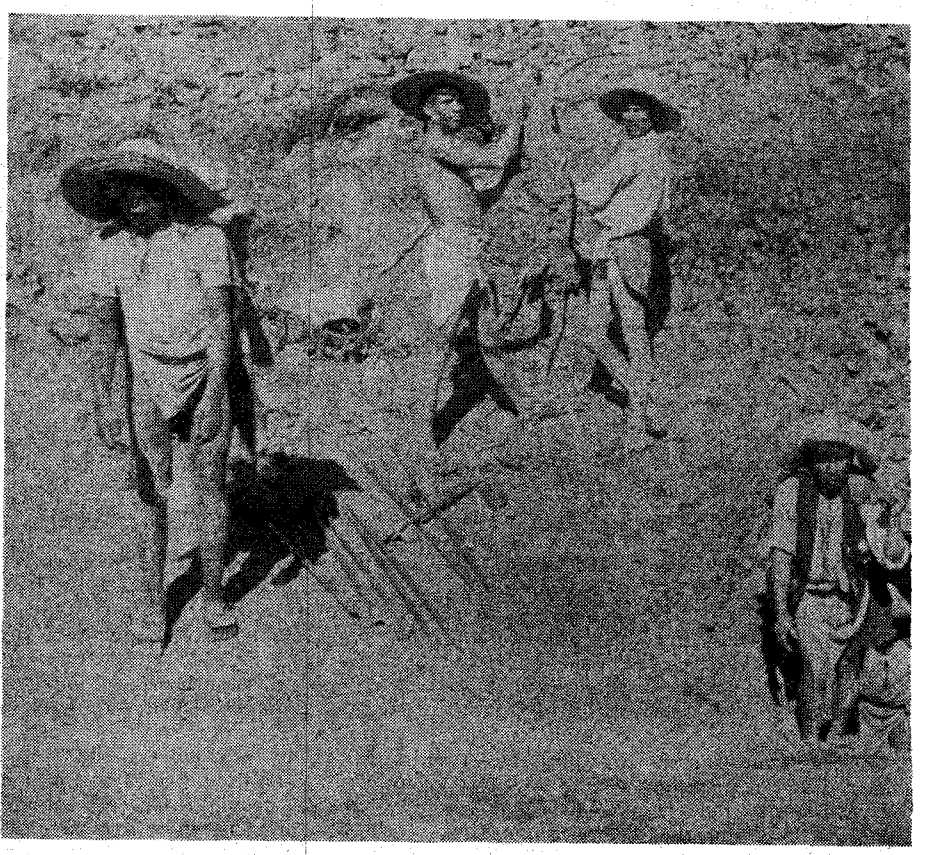
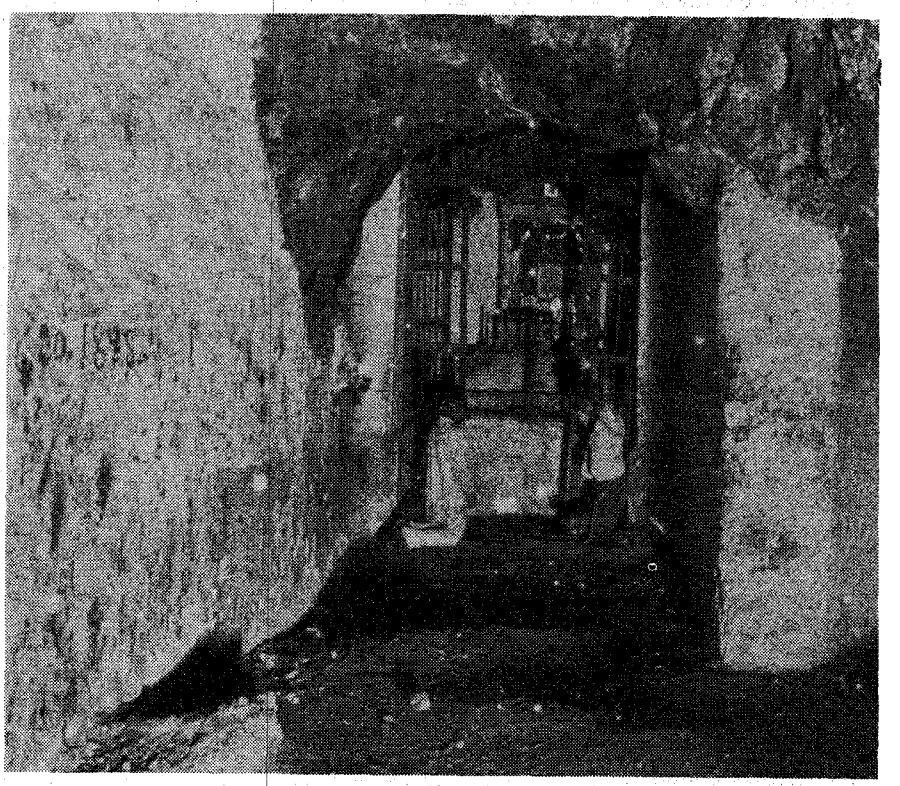
By VERONA GRANVILLE

From The Land of Sunshine, Vol. XII, No. 3
February 1900





LOST MINES

VOLUMES might be written about the "lost mines" of Mexico, which Baron von Humboldt called "the treasure house of the world." There is no subject more fascinating; and when a prospector or miner falls under its dazzling influence he pursues his search year after year, sacrificing his all in the radiant hope of uncovering untold wealth in buried treasure, or finding shafts and tunnels leading to great bodies of glittering ore.

Tradition locates most of the lost mines —or *minas tapadas*—in northern Chihuahua and Sonora, in the Sierra Madre. This area has always, until the past dozen years, been subject to periodic raids from Apaches; and miners were often forced to flee for their lives to the interior, and shafts and tunnels were concealed, and frequently all surface improvements destroyed by the owners themselves, to prevent discovery until they could safely return. That many never returned, and that many mines are still *tapada* no one acquainted with the history of mining in Mexico can doubt. In many instances the trails leading to old mines may have been totally destroyed during the rainy seasons, when the face of nature is sometimes altered beyond recognition by devastating storms.

At any *peon* hut one hears stories of lost mines, incalculably rich in gold ore or bullion; and fiction is so interwoven with fact that the most logical mind finds it difficult to tell where one leaves off and the other begins. It is no exaggeration to say that millions of dollars have been spent in pumping out old shafts and removing debris from ancient tunnels, many of which, no doubt, were abandoned by the Spaniards themselves as worthless. A few old mines have proved rich, a few more of sufficient value to work at a fair profit, but ninety per cent of them are worthless under present conditions; and so far as I have been able to learn, none of them contained buried treasure in bullion, though, considering the remoteness of the mines and the fact that shipments of bullion were made to the ports only once or twice a year, it may well be that much metal was left buried when a hegira took place before the all-conquering Apaches.

The Spaniards obtained vast amounts of silver in Mexico, but little gold outside the ancient temples. The patient Indians, content to work for a few *centavos* a day, never disclosed the location of the supposedly rich placers from which they obtained the gold that adorned the tem-

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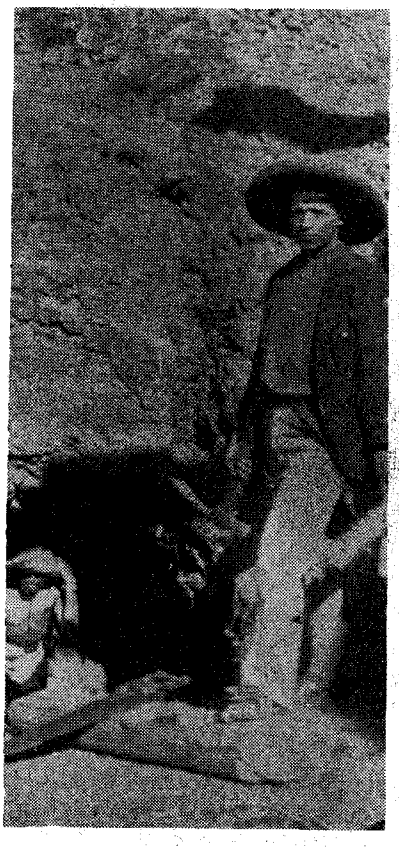

ples, or the few grains they traded for food and clothing. Bribes and tortures were equally unavailing to disclose the source of the coveted metal, except where it was found in small quantities. The Indians persisted that the gold images were the accumulation of ages; and time has proved the truth of this, for no large nuggets nor rich placers, compared with California, South Africa, Australia or the Klondike, have ever been found in Mexico. The largest nugget I have heard of was found in Guerrero, a few years ago, by an Indian who sold it for $300, about half its value. A beautiful nugget was found in Sonora that so strikingly resembled the sacred picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe as to inspire great awe among the Pima and Yaqui Indians. Another, smaller but equally beautiful, resembles a tiny cluster of grapes, so perfect that one can scarcely believe that nature was the sole artificer.

BUT in silver of virgin purity no country in the world can compare with Mexico. The largest lump of virgin silver known to the world was discovered near a Papago Indian pueblo in Sonora. It weighed 110 *arrobas*, or 2,750 pounds.

It was seized by the Viceroy of Mexico pending a dispute between the discoverer, Diego Asmendi, and a custom-house officer, and was finally confiscated by the Crown of Spain. The disheartened Asmendi died without revealing the source of the treasure. Some of the most beautiful wire silver in the world comes from the famous Batopilas mines, which were worked by the early Spaniards, and recently rehabilitated by the noted "Boss" Shepherd, once mayor of Washington, D. C.

At Zacatecas, in the great *veta madre*, wire silver with ruby stain is taken out in great masses and virgin purity—so beautiful and fascinating that it is small wonder much of it is stolen by the miners, despite the closest vigilance.

The so-called Yaqui goldfields have no existence, though industriously advertised each year by unscrupulous manipulators. It is true that there is gold in Rio Yaqui and all its tributaries; but it is in small quantities and so fine that the most industrious miner can make only wages. On Rio Mulatos, natives make a few *reales* a day after the rainy season. Gold is spread over a vast area of the Sierra Madre, but no placers are being extensively worked. An American company is erecting large works near Rio Concho, but it is questionable if the heavy cement-like deposit in which the gold is found will ever yield to modern machinery.

The prospector's only chance of obtaining a wealth of gold in the Sierra Madre is to uncover a *mina tapada*, or to follow the arroyos showing "color" or trace "float" until the "contact" is met; then, possibly, after weeks or months of searching, the vein may be found. Perhaps it will prove one in thousands of sufficient value to work; perhaps it is the remnant of a once great vein that has been scored away by nature, the values disseminated over a large area in small quantities and forever lost to man.

There is a twelve-thousand acre ranch in Sonora, every square yard of which will yield a color in the prospector's pan. The source of the gold was unsuccessfully sought for many generations, and when finally found in a hill ten miles distant, not more than an *arroba* was left of the once great vein. It assayed thousands of dollars to the ton, and the old *hacendado* died in poverty, bemoaning the fact that he had not lived a few hundred years sooner when the gold clustered thick in the seams of the denuded ledge that could be traced for more than a mile on the surface. Someday, perhaps, modern methods may find a means of gathering the scattered gold of the old rancho. It lies uncultivated since the death of the old Don, who heavily mortgaged his inheritance and wasted all the energies of his life in deploring the shabby trick played upon him by nature.

AT Piedras Azules, in the heart of the mountains, a prospecting party stopped one day for lunch. In searching for a lost knife, one of the party found a rock weighing about two tons from which native silver protruded. It yielded more than $4,000 when broken up and washed in the arroyo. The prospectors went out, organized a company with a capital of $25,000 and returned. They prospected for months without discovering a particle of metal, and left the mountains penniless.

It is believed that the rock from which the silver was obtained was carried down by the water in the arroyo from a mining camp forty-five miles distant—a solitary piece of float that cost the prospectors dearly. I have been unable to learn the cause of the beautiful blue color in the Piedras Azules, which is a small Pima pueblo a few miles from the Yepachic, and at the foot of a lofty mountain called La Divisadera.

Among the rich mines worked by the

Upper left photo, an old Mexican mine. At left, a chapel was constructed just off a main tunnel of this mine.

# of MEXICO

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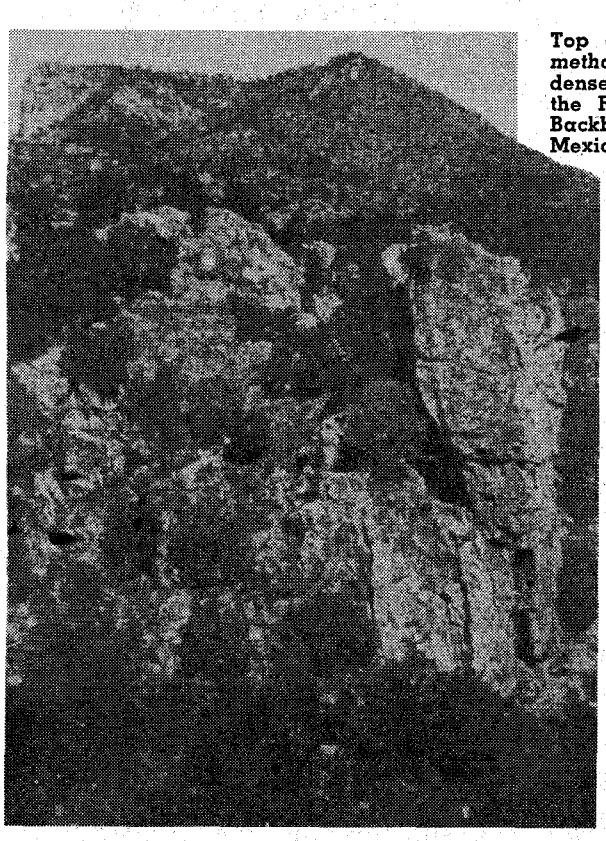
Spaniards was the Tarasca, in Sonora, of which Humboldt writes so fascinatingly, and Ward and other historians mention favorably. The history of Tarasca is one of evil deeds, of duplicity, of theft, of greed, and all the base passions incited by the love of gold. The mine was worked long before the Spaniards arrived in Mexico, and the gold and silver fashioned into ornaments by the aborigines. A family in Guaymas has a necklace of flying-fish purchased from a Pima Indian chief, who stated that the metal was dug from Tarasca.

The mine was worked by various Spaniards and later acquired for the Crown of Spain. It was extensively worked, barring certain periods during Apache wars, until the epoch of the French intervention when the shafts and tunnels are said to have been concealed by the *administrador*, Don Juan Moreno, an Imperialist, who was forced to seek safety in flight. After the restoration of peace, Tarasca was looked for in vain, and to the present time no one is certain of its location, though the mine now known as Ubarbo is believed to be the Tarasca.

Ubarbo had been extensively worked when rediscovered years ago, and its shafts and tunnels concealed under earth and brush. Rich pillars of ore were found in the drifts, and the mine corresponds in many respects with the description in the archives of the American consulate at Guaymas.



Top of page (left photo), the old method of washing tailings. On right, dense growth hampers travel along the Rio Aros. At left, the "Devil's Backbone," in the Sierra Madre, Mexico. Below, an ore carrier.

BUT the lost mine about which tradition gathers thickest is Taiopa, supposed to be located in the Sahuaripa district in Sonora. Little documentary evidence exists to prove Taiopa a reality. A wealthy Mexican gentleman recently made a trip to Madrid, and after minute search, at great expense, found absolutely no data to prove that such a mine was worked for the Crown of Spain, and no reliable data in the Mexican archives or elsewhere to prove that such a mine was ever known.

But quite as trustworthy as most documents are the traditions gathered from the Pima Indians. They stoutly maintain that Taiopa exists, and a few claim to know its locality. Small quantities of very rich ore are occasionally sold at the mountain mining camps, and all attempts to follow the Indians to the spot where it is found, or bribe them to reveal it, have failed. Wanting but little in addition to the corn they grow, they are imbued with a superstition that if they reveal the locality of a mine they will instantly drop dead. To one acquainted with the Indian character this statement may seem incredible; but any prospector or miner in the Sierra Madre will affirm its truth. Large sums of money have been offered the Pimas to tell where the *mina tapada* is. They scorn money, and the only sesame is mescal, by the liberal use of which the Indian may be made to disclose many things, but so far he has held inviolate his vow not to reveal to any mortal man the famous Taiopa.

The fascinating secret, in part, has been revealed to a woman, however. All tales of lost mines have for their central figure a grateful Indian; and this story is, in that particular, monotonously like

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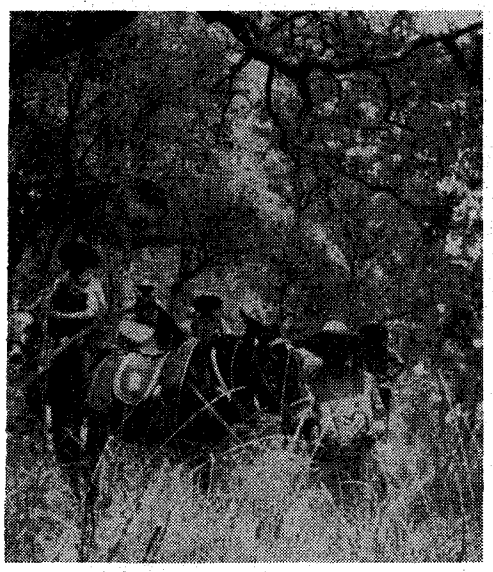


the rest. The facts so far as I have been able to discover are the following:

About a year and a half ago an old Pima chief fell ill in one of the valley pueblos, and was nursed by a Mexican lady so well known and so estimable that her statement is universally accepted. The old Indian returned to his tribe, and from time to time sent her rich bits of ore, which assayed thousands of dollars to the ton. All her efforts to induce him to lead her to the mine were futile. He said the Great Spirit would strike him dead if he did.

Last summer the plucky *señora* went to the mountains and lived among the Indians for three months, doctoring the sick, and giving presents of calico and gay ribbons to the women and small quantities of mescal to the men of the tribe. She became convinced beyond doubt that the spot from which the rich ore came was Taiopa. The chief admitted that it was the *mina tapada* that was worked when he was a boy. After much persuasion and the gift of a goodly portion of the fiery product of the maguey, he directed two women of his tribe to take her to within a few yards of the mine, that she might discover it unaided and save the Indians from the penalty of sudden death for revealing it.

Overjoyed at gaining so much, the Mexican woman had two burros packed with provisions, and the three women set out mounted on mules. They traveled mostly at night, passing through deep cañons and over lofty mountain passes. The fourth night, some hours after dark, the Indian women led her into a deep cañon and paused a short distance from a large rock. In the dim moonlight the old arrastre was seen, and across the cañon was a large ore dump from which opened a tunnel.

The woman gathered bits of ore from the dump and arrastre, but was hurried away by the Indians, who said they would be killed if they delayed beyond the time given them by the chief. They traveled until the moon went down, rested a few hours, and went on before daylight, completely baffling the Mexican woman as to the route they had brought her. They arrived at the pueblo at nightfall, and having taken four days to reach the mine and but one to return, the obvious conclusion was that she had been led about in a circle—a curious method of putting at rest the complex Indian conscience.

Despairing of gaining more, the Mexican woman returned to her home. In September she returned with her young son, a *mozo* and a few burros, to search for the elusive Taiopa. In crossing Rio Aros the *mozo* and two of the burros were drowned. Disappointed but not discouraged, the plucky woman left her son to work at a mining camp, and returned to the valley for fresh supplies, promising to return and prosecute the search. May her courage be rewarded by all the treasure which tradition attributes to the famed Taiopa!

OTHER lost mines of which one hears innumerable tales are Reina Mercedes, and the Casa Blanca, which are said to have been the property of the Crown during the Spanish occupation of Mexico. Both have probably been rediscovered and are worked today under other names. The Reina Mercedes is said by the Pima Indians to be one of the rich Concheño group of mines; and the Casa Blanca, the Casitas mine, thirty miles west of Mulatos.

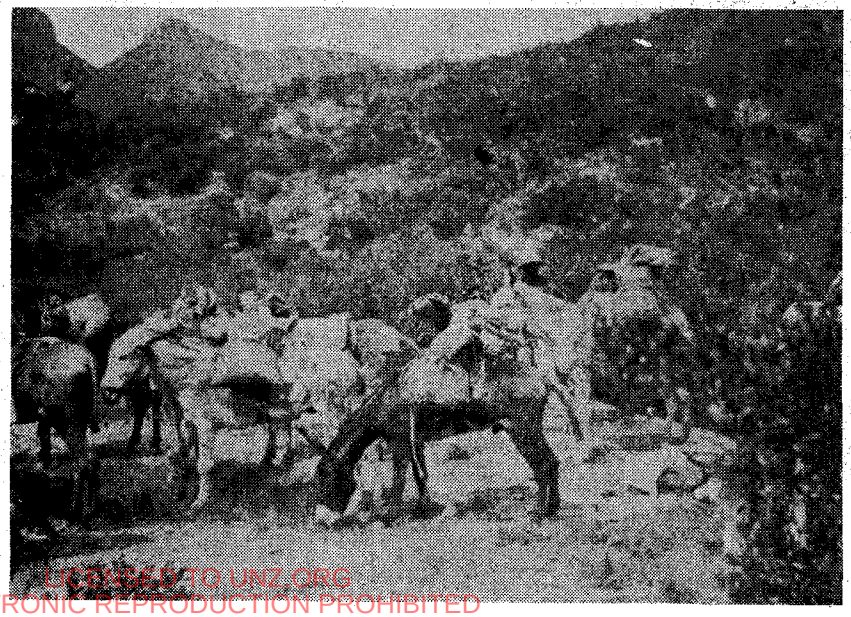
Near Casitas is an ancient mine, now worked by a Mexican company, that had open cuts on the surface for more than a mile, and several miles of underground workings. Near this mine, where a once large church has fallen into ruins, were found two copper bells, bearing the name of Guadalupe de Taiopa, thus leading many to believe that the Tajos mine is the long-lost Taiopa.

In searching for the lost mines of Mexico, with their fascinating traditions of buried treasure, few stop to consider the conditions under which they were worked. Ledges that were considered enormously rich by the Spaniards would yield no profit now, with the low price of silver and the high prices of freight and labor. During the Spanish occupation labor and food cost the mine owner comparatively nothing. As mules were scarce and expensive, all transportation of supplies to the mines and of bullion to the ports of Guaymas or Mazatlan was done by Indians, a *carga* of three hundred pounds being the weight one carried on his back. The ore was crushed in arrastres, the motive power being Indians, who also mixed by treading with bare feet the pulp with quicksilver and other elements to form amalgam. This was disastrous to the health, the quicksilver penetrating to the blood, stiffening the bones, and making old men of mere boys.

The cost of mining in the Sierra Madre today is more than twice as great as it was some forty years ago. To make even a modest profit, great economy must be exercised. Strict business methods prevail in every department—facts that are at last becoming evident in the mining world, which long held the occupation of delving for the treasures of Mother Earth as a "gamble."

No occupation, however, despite its hardships and isolation, offers richer rewards than mining, which imbues the delver with radiant hope that any day may bring to light a bonanza, rich as tradition tells us is the mysterious Taiopa.

(Continued on next page)



At right, a prospector's pack-train.

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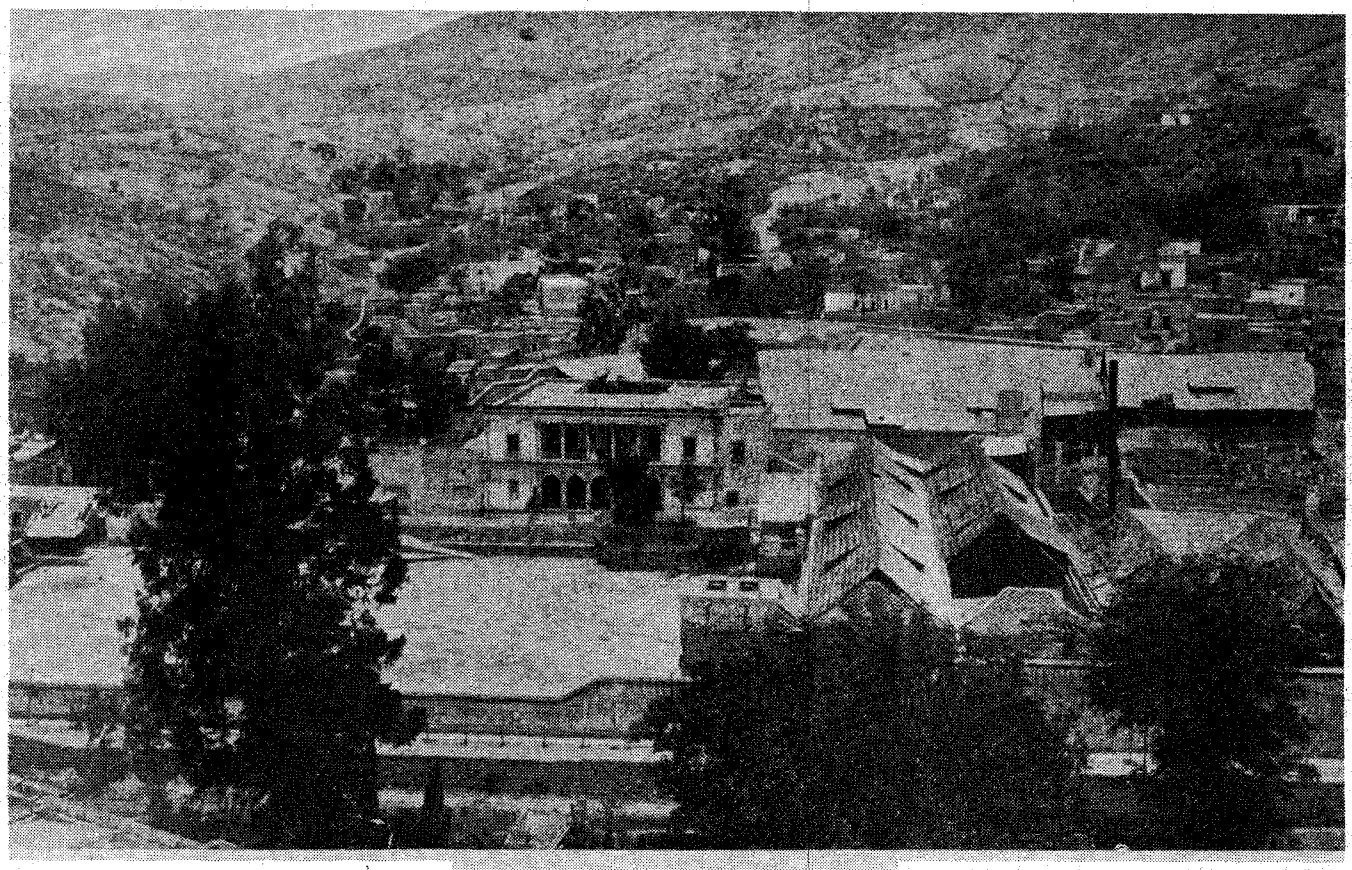
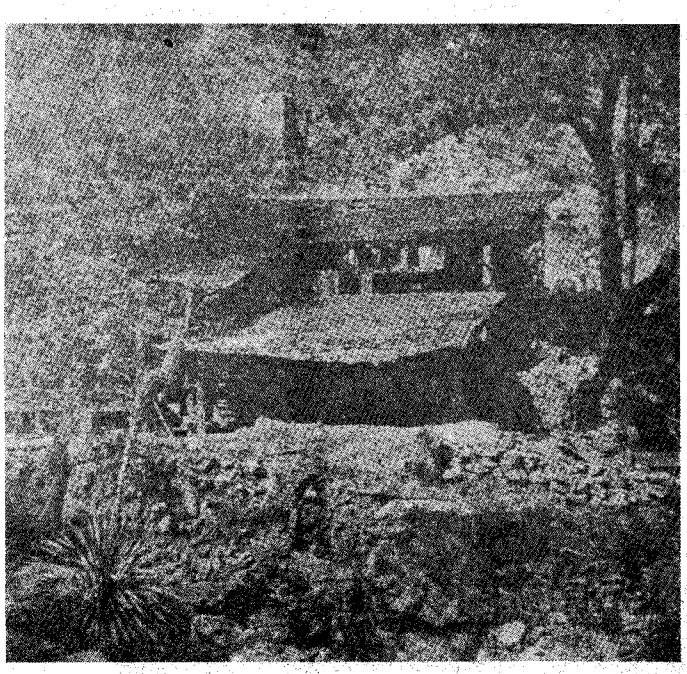


A TYPICAL HACIENDA.



Above, ore mill at Alma de Maria. At right, the ruins of a *vaso*, or smelter.

Above, old reduction works.

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Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 36)

ficers in full uniform; the governor, the city and county officials—all the big men and the beautiful women of the city and section were present. Not a thing was lacking to make it the event of the . . . time. At the proper time the gas was lighted, and the guests were spellbound with admiration.

"Some two hours later the gas went out suddenly, and we were left in the dark. Not a ray of light could be seen. The gas had been tested, gave satisfaction, and the gas man had gotten his money, and if memory serves me right, had gone east. Train and Cozzens were in a rage. Never saw Train so worked up in my life. The help was sent here and there for candles, and in an hour several hundred candles were doing their best to dispel the darkness and enliven the occasion. The ball went on and the people danced until morning.

"The hotel was never a financial success. I was with it a good while and it lost money from the start. It was too hightoned and too expensive for those days. Cozzens and Train returned to the east, and the public knows the history of the hotel."—*Courtesy Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.*

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KEGS OF DIMES IN THE BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON

By R. H. Jones

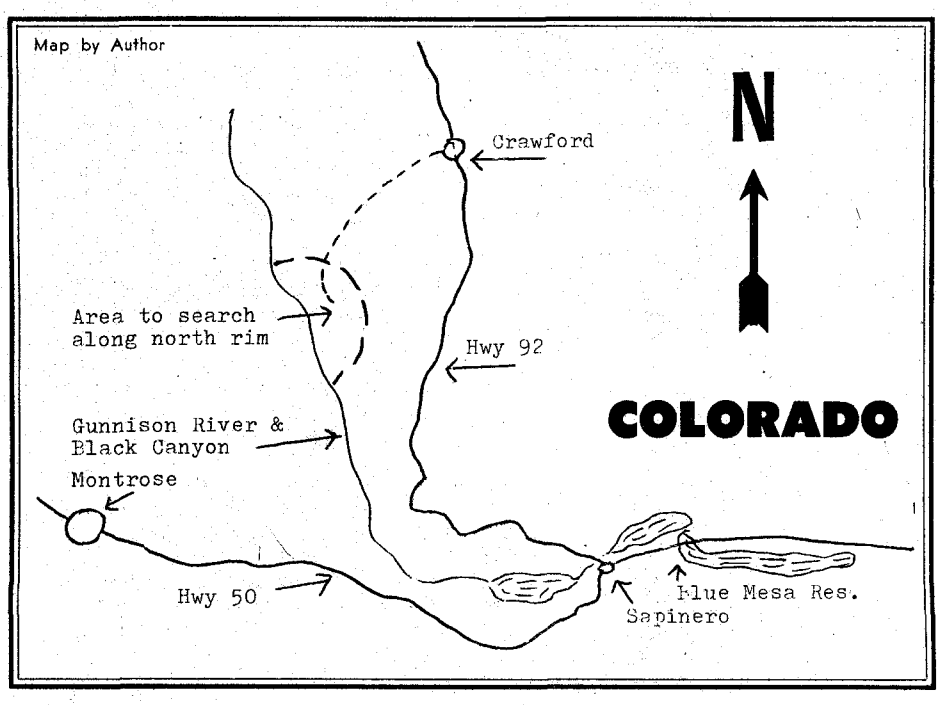
SEVERAL YEARS AGO a gentleman from Crawford, Colorado located a sizeable pile of Denver-minted dimes along the Black Canyon's north rim where a side wash fell into the river far below. The dimes were black, and amounted to nearly four gallons.

When he located the scattered dimes he spent the entire day picking them up from the rocky ground. The next day he decided that he must have retrieved all of them, as he was unable to find another single dime along the canyon's rim.

Checking into this story I was able to come up with this possible answer to the riddle of the dimes: Many years before, a wagontrain with armed guards had set out from the Denver Mint with a consignment for shipment to Phoenix, Arizona. The train consisted of four wagons filled with kegs of newly-minted dimes. Their supplies were carried in a separate wagon. During this trip the entire wagontrain and its men disappeared and were never seen or heard of again. They never reached Montrose, Colorado where they were due to check in.

A search party was sent out but after several months of combing the area, finally gave up. Indians were still roving the country and were known to attack travelers. It is believed that a group of Indians attacked the train, killing all its members, then after making off with the horses, shoved the wagons, with their kegs of coins, over the canyon's rim. It is thought they possibly opened one keg of coins to see what was inside and this was the pile found by the man from Crawford.

If true, there are about 24 kegs of dimes scattered at the bottom of those cliffs. It would be quite a chore packing them out of the canyon, but the treasure hunter who locates the correct site and recovers this rich treasure of uncirculated dimes will be set for life.



DAMNED GOVERNMENT BUG HUNTER

By L. Sprague de Camp

ABOUT 1935, being remotely related by marriage to Doctor Clinton Hart Merriam (1855-1942), I called on the

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old gentleman, then living in retirement in Washington. For a whole evening, he talked of his experiences in the West on the Hayden Survey of the early 1870s, when the Government scientist worked with a gun in one hand and a butterfly net or a geologist's hammer in the other.

Merriam, American biologist and ethnologist, had a long and distinguished career in the Biological Survey and later in the Smithsonian Institution. He specialized in North American vertebrates and California Indians, wrote over 400 papers, and took an active part in the studies that led to the Alaskan fur-seal treaties of 1912. In biology he was a notorious "splitter," recognizing fifty-five different species of bears of the brown-grizzly group in North America alone, where other students see only one.

"I always carried a double-barreled shotgun, loaded with buckshot," Merriam said that evening. "Once there were two men on horseback trying to shoot me; I managed to get both of them on the same side of me and got 'em both with one shot." (Since my visit was before the days of the portable tape recorder, I do not pretend that my recollection is perfectly verbatim after forty years; but this is how I remember the conversation.)

The tale I remember best is of his encounter with Lot Smith, a former Mormon leader and one of those involved in the Mountain Meadows massacre. Smith was ranching in northwestern New Mexico.

"Of course, there was a big reward posted for him, dead or alive," said Hart Merriam. "But he'd ride right through Santa Fe, with a rifle in his hand and an extra horse, all saddled up, led behind him. Somehow the sheriffs would all be busy playing poker in the back rooms of the saloons at that time.

"Well, I was riding along on my mule one morning when this man came over a rise and passed me going the other way. I had my double-barreled shotgun handy, and I said: 'Hello there, Lot Smith!'

"He grabbed for his gun and said: 'Who are you that knows my name?'

"'Why,' I said, 'everybody knows a big, fine-looking man like Lot Smith.'

"'But who are you?' asked he.

"'Well,' I said, 'I won't tell you who I am, but I'll tell you where I come from.' And I named the place where we were camped.

"'Oh!' he said. 'Just another damned government bug hunter! Pass, friend.'

"He was killed soon after that—not by a white man, but by an Indian. There was a big drouth, and Smith turned his cattle into the Navajo reservation to forage. The Navajos didn't like that, because their own cattle were dying from the drouth and there wasn't enough forage to feed their own stock and Smith's, too. So the old men of the tribe got up a delegation and went to argue with Smith about it. He just laughed at them and kicked them out of the house.

"Then the young Navajos said: 'That just shows you can't reason with a white man. You let us handle this thing our way.' So they went in a party to Smith's house. They walked in and told him to get his cows off their land, right away, or they'd kill them and eat them themselves.

"Well, Smith just sat there in his chair with his mouth open, he was so surprised. No Indian had ever talked to him like that before. Then he let out a roar and jumped for the young buck who had spoken, and the Indian pulled out a gun and shot him dead."

Milt Bryan's Adventures on the Santa Fe Trail

(Continued from page 20)

and it did not take him long to get up."

The soldiers mentioned by Bryan were under the command of Bvt. Major Bennet Riley, for whom Fort Riley, Kansas was later named. In response to demands by Santa Fe traders that they be given protection, President Andrew Jackson, who took office March 4, 1829, directed that four companies of soldiers escort the spring caravan as far west as the Arkansas River which was then the border between Mexico and the United States. Riley had 200 soldiers of the Sixth Infantry in his command. The U. S. Army had no mounted units—no cavalry— in 1829. The caravan with its foot soldier escort reached the Arkansas River near Chouteau's Island on July 10. There, near the international border, Bvt. Major Riley set up camp.

The following day, Bryan and a companion from the journey the year before went out with a squad of soldiers to recover the buried silver. "It was a few miles farther up the Arkansas River, and when we came to the memorable spot, we found the money safe on the island, where we had left it. The water had washed the earth away, and the silver was exposed to the view of anyone who might have passed along. We placed the money in sacks, and left it with Maj. Riley."

Bryan and his companion rejoined Captain Brent's caravan and started on toward Santa Fe. "We had not traveled far when our advance guard met some Indians. They turned, and when in two hundred yards of us, one man, Samuel Lamme, was killed, his body being completely filled with arrows. His head was cut off, and all his clothes stripped from his body. We had a cannon but the Spaniard who drove it had it tied up in such a manner that it could not be utilized for some time; but when it was turned upon them, the Indians fled in dismay.

"The soldiers, hearing the firing, came to our assistance. The next morning the hills were covered with fully two thousand Indians, who had evidently gathered there for the purpose of annihilating us. The coming of the soldiers was indeed fortunate, for when the cowards saw them, they disappeared. Captain Riley accompanied us for a few days, and see-

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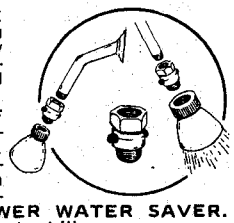

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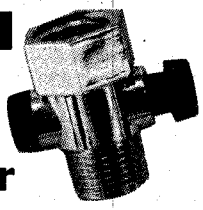

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ing no more Indians, he returned to his camp," recalled Bryan.

Arriving safely in Santa Fe, Bryan and the other traders turned a profit and by early fall had returned to Major Riley's camp. There Bryan picked up the money entrusted to the Army's care and, with the military ecort and caravan, continued east.

"We reached Fort Leavenworth late in the season, and from that point we all scattered. I received my share of the money, and bade my companions adieu, many of whom I have never seen since," wrote Bryan in 1885.

BRYAN married in 1833 and settled down near St. Joseph, Missouri until gold fever took him to California in 1852. He traveled to New York where he took a ship around Cape Horn to San Francisco. His search for gold in California apparently had little success. He then went north into central Idaho where, according to his record book, he panned $2,161.80 in gold along the Salmon River between July 25 and September 8, 1853. He returned to St. Joseph before winter.

With the opening of Kansas Territory in 1854, Bryan crossed the Missouri River and helped to settle the Doniphan County town of Wathena, which he named for a nearby Kickapoo Indian chief. An undated newspaper clipping, among several owned by Bryan's descendants, tells the story of a corn field planted by Chief Wathena. Milt Bryan "agreed to pay him $1 a row for 20 rows of corn." When the chief came to be paid, Bryan gave him a $20 gold piece. The old chief looked at it carefully, turned it over in his hand and then walked over to Bryan, laid it down at his feet and walked off. He had never seen one before. So the corn was paid for in 25-cent pieces, as the chief would accept nothing else.

Milt Bryan lived the final years of his life in the Wathena area, dying there on March 27, 1892, a few months after his eighty-fifth birthday. His roots in America were deep. He was a great-nephew of Daniel Boone's wife, Rebecca Bryan. He was a great-nephew of James Wilson of Pennsylvania, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and later a U. S. Supreme Court Justice. And Bryan's grandfather, Dr. Thomas Bryan, served as a surgeon in the Revolutionary War. Milton E. Bryan was worthy of this heritage. He was a credit to them all.

The Bundy Avant Story

(Continued from page 15)

men or sometimes for men who were not able to ride any horse in the remuda. I remember one time when we were catching our day horses from a bunch in the rope corral. I was waiting for mine when I saw a real fat one in the bunch, and pointed to him.

"What's the matter with that one?" I asked.

Right away Al Sheppard said, "He's mine, but I sure wish you'd ride him. I've been in the hospital and he's a little frisky for me."

I heard the boys snickering—which meant that the horse was a little more than frisky—but I had them lead him out anyway. I knew from the way he cut his eyes around to me and was so touchy, that it wasn't altogether because Al had been in the hospital that the horse hadn't been ridden.

With a little patience I got the saddle on and cinched down tight. When I started to mount he jumped right by me but I was prepared for that and had a grip on the bridle by the side of his head, and I mounted easily. That horse went into action and he could really buck. I rode him all around the place, across ditches and under tree limbs, and I thought he would never stop. Finally he deliberately jumped off a bank into the bed of a canyon eight or ten feet deep.

He gave up finally and we started the drive, but I was mad at him and showed him no favors. When a big steer broke out of the herd I put after him just like I was on a good cowhorse. I roped the steer's front feet, more by luck I guess than expertise. I didn't care what the horse did, I knew I could ride him. That steer turned a flip in the air; the rope came off and he went back to the herd and stayed there.

At noon when the other boys changed horses, I stayed with mine to make the evening drive. He wasn't even tired; what a horse he was!

When we finished work at that place and were moving to another range the next day, I asked Al if he wanted me to ride his horse down there. In disgust Al said, "He's your horse now, do whatever you damn please with him."

But the next morning when the horses were brought in, he wasn't with them, nor were two others. We went back to look for them and found all three dead under a big tree, struck by one mighty bolt of summer lightning.

WE had to round up horses, just to keep them off the range. They increased so fast they just about kept the cattle starved out, since they could bite the grass shorter and range farther from water. When they got ready to go to water they would strike a lope and cover fifteen miles in no time. On one drive we gathered 2,500 horses and mules; some not worth a dime, old mares and studs twenty years old.

There were also two outlaws from the Block Ranch called Sun Beam and Black Sis. They were sold to an Eastern buyer and none of us ever expected to hear from them again. Several years later, though, Bill Riley went to Louisiana and came back telling he had seen them both being worked on a farm and ridden down the road by a Negro boy. They were poor as snakes, and we never learned how that boy broke those two outlaws to ride.

Generally, on a roundup, we worked from the Block range north of the Capitan Mountains to Crow Flat, 150 miles south; then from near Roswell to the Black Range in Sierra County. But in working other places too, I made good friends in twenty-five of the thirty-two counties of New Mexico. I did not draw a paycheck for, as I have said, I was working my own cattle along the way.

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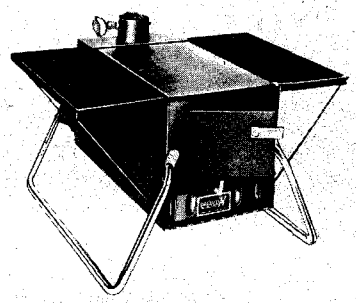

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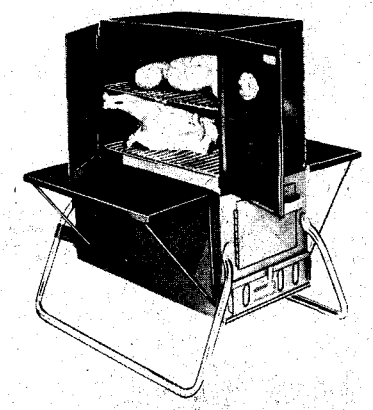

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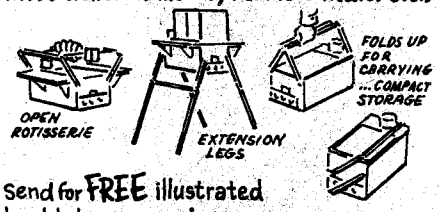

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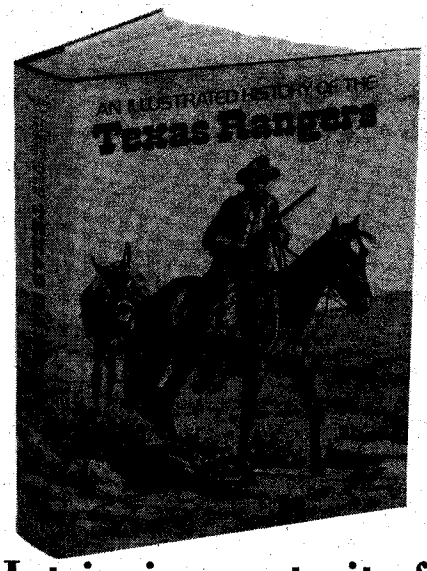

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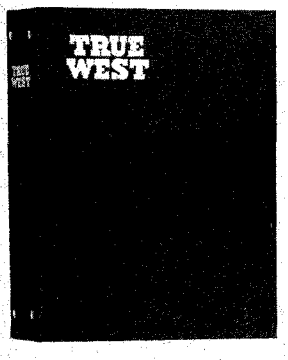

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We were on a drive near Hot Springs in October 1920 when it came a big snowstorm. The men would have frozen to death had they stayed with those drifting cattle. They turned them loose and came on into camp. The next morning Dick Kendrick, the boss, fired everybody but me and the cook. He couldn't fire me, and the cook told him to go to hell.

When I was about twenty years old, a Mrs. Connell whose husband had been killed at Tularosa over a water right, wrote me from her home in El Paso, Texas, to ask my help in gathering some of her steers which had been brought in to fill a beef contract for the Indians. I knew they had gone pretty far astray as I had seen some of them as far north as the Capitan Mountains.

I wasn't busy right then, so I got some good men together and started working south from where I thought the steers had migrated. Meantime, Watt Gilmore had heard that I was gathering the Connell steers, and sent me word that he would pay me five dollars per head for any of his steers I might find at the same time. I had Tom Moody, Merle Wingfield, Ed and John Nelson, Henry Wilson, and George Moody as a cook. We rounded up every animal that we could find and cut out the two brands we were looking for. We had a lot of other help too, as everybody was glad to get this stock off the range.

When we got to Tularosa, I contacted Mrs. Connell's foreman and he called her at her home. She instructed him to count the steers and advise her of the number and she would send me a check.

Her foreman, being more of a farmer than a cowboy, and poorly mounted, I fear, let them scatter in every direction and head back to the mountains.

I HAD WRITTEN Watt Gilmore and told him about what time to expect us, but he was not there to meet us. We waited around two or three days and finally Watt's brother, Matt, came and told me that he would guarantee me five dollars extra if I would take them on to the ranch in the San Andreas Mountains, seventy-five miles away.

It was the middle of May and the weather was very hot. The nearest route to the ranch was through the White Sands straight to the mouth of Hembrillo Canyon. We found that we could only move the steers at night. In the daytime we could only keep them headed in the right direction, so that at least every step they took would be one step nearer where we wanted to go.

There was only a small spring or two in that whole distance with enough water for camp use and our horses, until we got near the mouth of Hembrillo Canyon. Some of the boys would ride on ahead to the spring, water their own and the extra horses, then come back where we would change horses, then let them take the thirsty ones we had been riding to water.

Some of the steers were four and five years old and weighed 1,400 pounds. Before we got to the water in Hembrillo

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Canyon, some of those big steers gave out. They simply laid down and refused to go any farther. There was nothing to do but to go on and leave them behind. When we got the rest of them to the water, we stayed over that night and the next day to rest them. By that time the big old steers who had laid down surprised us. Every one of them came on in.

When we got to Watt's ranch he was still not there. We found that he had been called to court at Hillsboro. Since there was no telling when he would get home we turned the steers into a small pasture and started back.

We took the shortest route, and halfway across the flats we passed about two miles from the Rich Cattle Company headquarters. We could see a cloud of dust and stock milling around down there. Leaving two men with the loose horses we rode down to see what was happening.

As we approached the ranch house an old man came out to meet us. He had on a floppy hat, a flour sack tied around his middle for an apron, and a pair of old houseshoes which had seen their best days. I judged him to be at least seventy-five years old by the wrinkles and the way he squinted out of his watery old eyes.

He greeted us in a friendly manner and said his name was Pete. In answer to our query about the milling stock, he told us that all the men were down south at the lower end of the valley working cattle. We could see three windmills standing still, and Pete explained that the wind had died four days before and he didn't know how to start the gasoline pump, with which each mill was equipped to pump water.

One of my men, John Nelson, was an experienced pump man and before long he had all three pumps going. The water ran into a long watering trough in a corral. We held the gate shut till the trough was full, then turned in about seventy-five head of stock. That was about all that could water at one time. When they had their fill, we put them out and turned in another bunch.

The old man was so happy to see the stock watering that he told us he would cook us a good dinner and make a big prune pie, something we had not tasted for months. I sent one man back to get our chuckwagon brought down, and our horses were turned loose in a pasture where they were. Good as his word, the old man had a fine dinner of chicken and dumplings, mashed potatoes, and gravy, in addition to the pie.

We spent the next three days catching up with the water supply and watering all the stock which came to the wells from miles around.

After lunch on the third day, the old man told me to stay, that he wanted to talk to me. He took a seat in the shade of a small adobe building and had me bring a chair with a rawhide bottom. When we were seated he began, "I've taken a likin' to you. I don't know how to thank you for waterin' the stock. They're not mine and it ought not to make any difference to me, but I didn't like to see 'em die of thirst."

I told him that I felt well paid with the good meals he had cooked for us and that we didn't want to see them die, either.

He waved his hand for silence, and I sensed that he had something on his mind which had bothered him for a long time and that he felt that he had found someone to confide in. I waited for him to go on. But he sat there for some time, like he was having trouble trying to decide where to begin. At last he looked at me with a wry grin, and said, "I told you my name was Pete, but I didn't tell you the rest of it, did I?"

I said, "No, you didn't, Pete."

"It's Pete Maxwell," he said. "Does that mean anything to you?"

I caught my breath in surprise. Of course, every schoolboy knew that it was in Pete Maxwell's house that Pat Garrett killed Billy the Kid. The old man looked me in the eyes for a long minute before he said, "I'm goin' to tell you something, but first I want you to promise me you won't tell it to a living soul as long as I'm alive."

I solemnly promised that I would keep his secret, and he continued, "After I'm dead you can tell it to anybody you want to. You can put it in your Bible if you want to, because it's the truth."

I think I knew that he was going to tell me something about Billy the Kid, so when he said, "Billy is not dead; I can take you to where he lives and has a nice family," I wasn't surprised. All my life I had heard men argue that Pat Garrett didn't really kill Billy the Kid. When I didn't act surprised, he took it as disbelief on my part and talked louder to convince me.

"I'll tell you how it was," he said. "There was no light in the house and Pat and I were in the dark when we heard someone come in. We both thought it was Billy. So when the man who came in sensed someone else was there beside me, he said, 'Quien es?' and Pat just fired. We heard the man fall. But when we struck a match and looked at him, we saw that it was not the Kid." He looked at me in a helpless sort of way, no doubt, harking back to that long ago night.

I didn't say anything and he continued, "Pat was pretty well shook up, as he didn't want it said that he had killed the wrong man. It was a Mexican and we decided he was a drifter who would never be missed by anyone in a position to prove anything. I agreed to keep quiet, too, as I could see it would give Billy a chance to slip away and start a new life, which he had been talking of doing."

Pete Maxwell had some weaknesses, which caused him to lose his ranch and end up cooking for another outfit, but he was a truthful man. I never doubted what he said because if there was a man alive besides Pat Garrett who knew the truth concerning that shooting at the Maxwell house, it would be Pete Maxwell himself.

I remembered old Pete's story some

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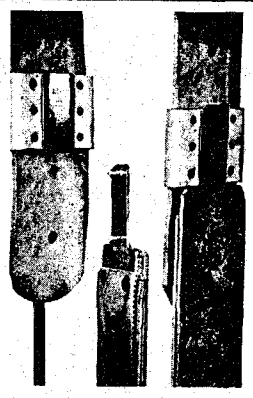

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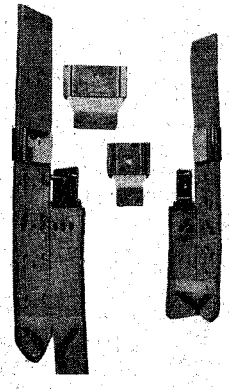

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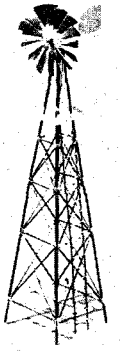

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years later when I had some business with Mr. John W. Poe at his bank in Roswell. I don't remember just how it came up, but Mr. Poe asked me what I thought of Pat Garrett. I replied that from what I had heard, I didn't think too highly of him. He then told me that he had been Pat's deputy when word came that Pat had killed Billy at Pete Maxwell's house in Fort Sumner. "As you probably know," he said, "Pat, Billy and I were good friends at one time. I wanted to see the Kid one more time before he was put away, to sort of pay last respects."

He strummed his fingers on his desk and his face was working with anger. After a time he went on, "I used up two horses, riding all night to get there. What do you think happened when I got there?" he demanded. I couldn't even guess, so I asked what did happen.

He told me that Pat refused to let him see the Kid's body. "At first," he went on, "I thought it was some kind of a joke. But when I persisted, I saw that he meant it. He refused me a perfectly reasonable request without giving me a reason. When it soaked in that he was serious, I knew he had a reason that he couldn't or wouldn't tell, so I took my badge off right slow like and handed it to him and I've hated his guts ever since."

I thought of old Pete's story, told to me three years before and had a strong desire to tell Poe about it, but old Pete was still alive. If Old Pete had been there he would more than likely have told Mr. Poe what he had told me, but it was not for me to do.

This made the second time in a period of three years that I had been told by two men, who of all people in the world should know the facts, that Billy was not killed by Pat Garrett. Of course, John Poe did not say that it was not the Kid in that casket which Garrett would not open. And Poe did not say outright that he didn't think it was the Kid, but he had his doubts. And in view of what Maxwell told me I have always had my doubts too.

(To be concluded in the next issue)

Lonely Are the Graves

(Continued from page 9)

miles into Mexico under a mesquite tree, and all it said was "Bill 1887." Who Bill was or how he died will never be known.

I stop sometimes at such a place and do a lot of thinking. Who was he? Where did he come from? Who took the time to painstakingly carve his headstone? Did his mother once tuck him into bed and kiss him goodnight? Did he wait in his front yard once long ago for his dad to come home from work and pat his tousled head? Did some poor mother and father watch him walk out of the yard for the last time, never realizing that the West would claim their son forever?

I have buried two myself. Both were just a few scattered bones and a skull, and let me tell you right here that you won't find a complete skeleton with all bones joined—even the fingers, like you see in the movies. Anyone dead for any length of time will be scattered all over and you will probably never find all of the bones.

The first bones I buried were on a little knoll and inside of a small rock enclosure. I had ridden up there to look the country over and saw a backbone with the stubs of some ribs still on it. Careful sifting of the sand disclosed the skull and though I'm not much on preaching I said a few things to the Creator of all and rode on. For those of you who would say I should have called the sheriff, I was many miles deep in Mexico and I had some knowledge of the nearest "sheriff." He would just have said, "O.K., Blackie," and gone back to sleep.

I have often thought that the person who left his bones in that lonely spot may have been shooting it out with someone. He was in a good place with rock all around him to a height of about four feet, maybe five in places, and I'm sure it was no accident he died on a small hill that commanded the desert for 300 yards in all directions. The bones were snow white, so it had been a long time ago.

I THINK it's a shame that some people are trying to make a quick buck by digging up the graves of our early Westerners. A few years back someone started a rumor that the Chinese in the graveyard of a certain semi-ghost town had been buried with a twenty-dollar gold piece on each eye. This prompted somebody to go dig up one of the graves late one night, only to find nothing.

Not long ago a group was caught in the act and were handled pretty rough by the courts. I've met relic hunters who thought it was legal to dig in ghost-town cemeteries. It is against the law in every state. I can't for the life of me see what makes people tick who will do a thing like that. Any guns or such left in the ground for a hundred years or so would be worthless, and darn few men were ever buried with their weapons. Why put a nice rifle or pistol in a grave?

One man told he would love to do some digging along the Camino Diablo in Arizona, but feared the ghosts he might disturb while doing so. Well, I ain't saying I believe in ghosts and I ain't saying I don't. I've slept in a cemetery using a grave mound for a head rest; I've slept in ghost towns, cliff dwellings, old houses and forts, and never was bothered. 'Course I never dug up no graves either.

But a man ought to have a better reason than that to let the dead alone. It has been a Christian custom to respect the dead and their resting place, and no one can go out and disturb graves and still call themselves a Christian and a man.

Let our Westerners lie where they are. Folks should spend just a few minutes thinking before they act. Maybe they have some kin somewhere in a lone grave. My grandfather and grandmother on my father's side are all alone side by side in death, as they were for nearly seventy years in life. The nearest graveyard, as such, is many miles from where they are buried.

Then, too, there is a thought in the

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back of my mind that when I go back to riding the lonely trails and canyons and ridges of the back country, which I may very well do, I fear that someday (many years from now, I hope) some relic hunter in some canyon may walk up to a grave with his shovel and start digging under a rock that says "Blackie 19—?"

Lost Soldiers' Mine

(Continued from page 17)

thick underbrush.

The story passed through three minds before being written down, and a few details became garbled. Murray recorded the party of soldiers as having been led by "Captain Manley," a name probably derived from that of Private Manley Martin who actually discovered the gold. (Discovering a ledge of gold can be enough to get a soldier promoted, at least in the memory of those who would imitate him.)

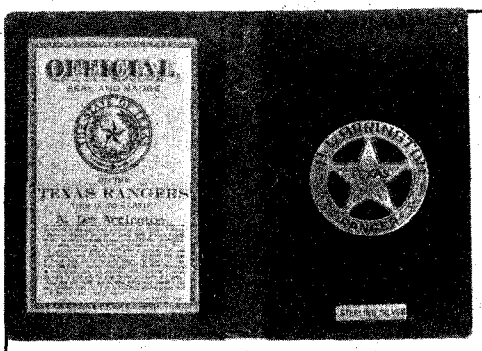
The little hamlet of Eden at the head of Eden Valley no longer exists, and modern maps do not show Andy's Creek. Names of creeks change, however. Murray records the case of a man named Johnson who believed the lost mine to be near Johnson Creek, above Powers on the south fork of the Coquille. Johnson told that a Swede came along while he was working that creek and asked if Johnson would tell him of a likely place where he could "rock out a few dollars." Johnson sent him to a small bar about three miles upstream. Several weeks later he went up to see how his visitor was doing. The Swede had just finished working the bar, from which he had taken more than $15,000 in gold.

ARTHUR ROBBINS of Riddle was another man who just missed a fortune while searching for the Lost Soldiers' Mine. Robbins came out West from Arkansas in 1930, and supported his large family through the Depression by working a rocker along Sixes and Rogue Rivers and Cow Creek. The result was a lifelong fondness for the mining profession.

As Robbins' son O'Dell tells it, his father was prospecting up Eden Valley in 1955 when his search took him across the watershed into Coos County. Lightweight black rocks began showing up in his pan. He inquired among old-timers about the source of this unexpected find, and was told that they had heard of coal being mined on Eden Ridge a century earlier and packed overland for use in the forges in gold-mining camps.

Robbins followed this lead and found an eighteen-foot thick seam of high quality coal, which clearly showed tunnel scars of early-day mining. He formed a partnership with Roy Rannells, a mining engineer for the then fledgeling Hanna Nickel Company, and Jim Carrol, a contractor who had the heavy duty equipment needed to develop the site.

When Carrol's unexpected death tied up the equipment in estate, the discouraged surviving partners sold out for $10,000. The fortunate buyer is said to have resold his interest in the coal deposit to Pacific Power and Light the same year for $100,000.



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According to the State of Oregon Department of Geology, Roy Rannells, Jim Carrol, and A. A. Robins *(sic)* initiated a small exploratory program at Eden Ridge during the summer of 1955. Their permit was taken over by G. D. Rannells, who asked the Department of Geology to examine the property. Pacific Power had an agreement with Rannells for prospecting the development under his permit and began an intensive exploration program in 1956. The company announced plans for a combined fossil fuel plant for load power and a high head hydro plant for peaking periods.

What does this case of a lost coal mine say about the Lost Soldiers' gold mine? For one thing, if an eighteen-foot vein of coal can be lost and not found again for a full century, then it seems reasonable that a few inches of gold-bearing quartz may actually be out there too, in spite of earnest and futile efforts to relocate the spot.

By the same logic, if trying to locate 5,000 acres of rich coal field in the Oregon wilderness is like looking for a needle in a haystack, what is it like looking for that little vein of gold?

Killers' Trail of Thread

(Continued from page 19)

of cloth about as breastworks, and with all their muskets reloaded, they cautiously awaited the attack that was certain to come.

Aware that they outnumbered their opponents by ten or more to one, the Comanches deliberately took their time before pressing the attack. They were heavily armed with bows, lances, and tomahawks, but carried only a limited quantity of muskets and powder. During the early hours of the fight, they encircled the camp at a distance of 100 to 150 yards and employed various ruses to draw the Mexicans' fire.

Gressier and his teamsters, in the hope of discouraging their attackers, triggered a volley of bullets at the first rustling of any branch or bush. Occasionally they caught momentary glimpses of the warriors as they darted about, and now and then they knew a bullet had struck its mark when some Comanche howled or dropped to the ground. But throughout the fight the war party did not show the least inclination to abandon the siege.

At the first sound of gunfire, Castleman grabbed two muskets and rushed to a window. His cabin stood at the top of a hill and he had an excellent view of the impending massacre where columns of smoke and gun flashes emerged from the cedar brake surrounding the campsite. The number of ponies and glimpses of warriors scampering about confirmed his fear regarding the size of the Indian party.

At a distance of 150 yards from the cabin was a gnarled post oak upon which Castleman had nailed a paper target for musket practice. The white object soon caught the eye of a young Indian. As he stood before it, curiously examining the bullet holes, Castleman took a careful aim and was about to pull the trigger when his wife intervened. She begged him to refrain from firing since, because of the number of the warriors, the couple's only hope hinged upon the possibility that the Comanches might become intoxicated with their successful plunder of the caravan and leave the settler and his family unmolested.

Soon aware that he was in an exposed position, the young Indian glanced quickly at Castleman's cabin and darted back into the underbrush.

AS the Indians had hoped, the constant rate of fire from the Mexicans began to subside and by mid-morning had deteriorated to only an occasional shot. Believing that Gressier and his teamsters had depleted their supply of powder and shot, the Indians, advancing from all sides, crawled on their bellies to within fifty yards of the camp.

At a signal from their chief, they charged the teamsters, assailing them with a barrage of bullets, arrows, and lances. Gressier and his men fired one final volley, and then, using their muskets as clubs, fought like tigers until a pervasive silence encompassed the massacre site.

With the firing and yelling ended and his worst fears confirmed, Castleman and his wife fearfully pondered their perilous predicament. He even thought of dispatching his wife and son on horse-

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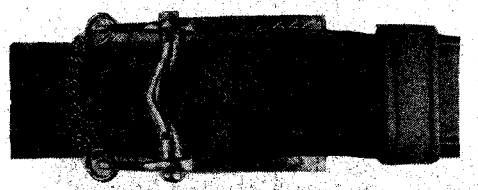

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back toward Gonzales but decided against it.

In time the Indians' upraised voices, whoops, and laughter became increasingly loud. They ransacked the carts and packs, broke open the whiskey kegs, and soon were dancing about an open space, their bodies wrapped with bolts of brightly-colored cloth. Later Castleman watched as two columns of mounted Comanches filed slowly over the neighboring hill. Some of them held a bolt of cloth under each arm, while others struggled to carry a cask or a keg. Then there followed in single file near the end of the columns six of Gressier's mules, their packs in place. As the last Indian disappeared over the horizon, Castleman counted altogether almost eighty horsemen, the largest war party of Comanches he had ever seen in DeWitt's colony.

At the end of the columns rode the young Indian, no more than a lad and probably on his first raid, that Castleman had had in his sights. Already nearing the point of drunkenness, the boy carried a box under one arm and toyed with a single spool of red thread, the end of which had been wrapped around a finger, in his right hand.

The spool soon fell to the ground and, as yard after yard trailed out behind him, the youth became fascinated by the great length of thread that was wound upon it. As each spool played out, he started reeling out another, and then another, and by nightfall, after the Comanches had ridden westward for hours along the river, there was mile after mile of colored thread stretching along the south bank of the Guadalupe.

WHEN the last Indian disappeared, Castleman took his musket and headed for the lake. The battle site was fully as ghastly as he had expected—mutilated corpses still bleeding from multiple lance wounds. He found several Indian bodies floating in the lake. Castleman hurriedly gathered his family and some belongings and carried them to safety in Gonzales, arriving late in the night.

News of an Indian attack traveled fast and far in the Gonzales vicinity, as it always did. Before noon he and twenty-seven other men were in the saddle and en route back to Castleman's cabin. The group of frontiersmen with Castleman included Joseph C. Darst, Mathew Caldwell, John Davis, Robert M. White, Dan McCoy, Jesse McCoy, B. D. McClure, Ezekiel Williams, George W. Cottle, Andrew Sowell, Sr., Dr. James Miller, Almeron Dickinson and several others, some of whom had arrived from the States only two days earlier. McClure was elected captain to lead the men, and shortly after noon, they arrived at the scene of the massacre.

The Indian trail was plain and clear, sometimes red, sometimes green, or blue, but always it followed west along the south bank of the river. At about the spot where the trail of thread played out, the war party crossed the Guadalupe at Erskine's Ford, some twelve miles south of Seguin, then headed for Darst Creek, later following the York's Creek divide on a northwesterly course toward their home country.

Days passed before McClure and his men sighted the Comanche campfire on a high ridge overlooking the San Marcos River, opposite the present-day city of that name. In the center of their camp the warriors had erected a pole, around which the grass had been completely trampled down, for throughout the previous night the Comanches had performed their well-known scalp dance, celebrating their victory.

Outnumbered three to one, McClure was unwilling to risk a fight without the element of surprise, and as the Indians were then in the process of breaking camp, he chose to pursue them along the banks of the Blanco River.

Two more days would elapse before the company would encounter the Comanches again. They followed them along the banks of the Blanco, where fresh Indian sign confirmed that the war party was only a short distance ahead. Obscured the following morning by a dense fog bank, McClure and his men were moving cautiously along the south bank when suddenly the fog lifted and an Indian lookout on a nearby hillside sounded an alarm.

Thus discovered, McClure hurried his company to a thick cedar brake, dismounted, and sent Darst and Dickinson ahead to scout for the main body of warriors. The rest of the men advanced through the thick underbrush and were almost to an open field by the river when they saw their scouts beating a retreat, closely pursued by eight Comanches.

The two scouts led their happy pursuers right into the musket muzzles of their companions, who promptly dropped the eight with as many shots.

Other whoops and shouts revealed that the main body of Comanches was straight ahead near the riverbank, and McClure's men charged across the open field to the next cedar brake. When they finally made contact it became obvious that the war party was seeking to escape across the river with their plunder rather than press the fight, and their yelling and whooping almost drowned out the ensuing musket fire.

A few warriors put up a limited defense, releasing volleys of arrows, while others led loaded mules into the water, or started across carrying bolts of cloth.

Their defense soon gave way to rout, however, the fleeing warriors abandoning much booty on the south bank in their haste to escape to the underbrush on the opposite shore. Spread out as they were along the Blanco, the Indians' flight became a trapshoot for the frontiersmen, who fired as fast as they could reload.

The general melee lasted perhaps ten or twelve minutes, with nearly half of the war party escaping to the opposite bank where they soon disappeared, and the remainder dying in the water, leaving balky mules in the center of the stream and bolts of cloth floating downriver.

Thus shorn of their mounts and weapons, those who escaped were no longer effective as a raiding party, and no further attempt at pursuit was made. The Texans lost none killed, but three of

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them had been hit by arrows, each suffering a minor flesh wound. They then collected the stolen mules and Indian ponies, loaded as much of the Indian plunder as could be salvaged on the animals' back, and began their long trek back to Gonzales.

The fight on the Blanco River was only one of many such engagements that would eventually transpire before the Comanche tribe was finally resettled in Oklahoma. And many lives would be lost before that day arrived. One of McClure's veterans, later to become Captain Mathew Caldwell, or "Old Paint," of the Texas Army, eventually led a dozen or more expeditions to curb their attacks.

In 1842, Caldwell became the hero of the Battle of Salado Creek, but many of McClure's old Indian fighters were no longer living to be with their comrade that day, for on March 6, 1836, J. C. Darst, Jesse McCoy, G. W. Cottle, Robert M. White, Almeron Dickinson, and others were among the twenty-one Texans from Gonzales who died with Travis, Crockett, and Bowie at the Alamo.

The "Coffee" Woman

(Continued from page 21)

Woodsdale or anyone who lived there. It was a disappointment to Bertha and Loren. They had made friends in the town and countryside and they would have liked chatting about them.

When they brought up the subject of Woodsdale, Mrs. Carpenter wouldn't talk. She didn't talk much, anyway, and when travelers drove along the road past the Ives house she hid in the back room until they were out of sight.

ALL IN ALL, she was an odd guest, if you could call an uninvited person a guest, especially one who stayed weeks and weeks. She was odd even in the way she acted about the weekly newspaper from Woodsdale. She never went to town when Loren went after groceries and mail but she paced the floor until he came home. Then she would grab the newspaper from Woodsdale and read it, end to end.

Mrs. Carpenter brought no luggage with her. When she appeared at the side of Loren's wagon, the day she came, she had nothing in her hands. It was as if her coming had been the result of a sudden impulse, as perhaps it was. Woodsdale had experienced few easy moments after the Hay Meadows tragedy, and the Colonel's death did nothing to take away tension. Maybe someone had told her she was in danger because she had been there when he died. Maybe she suspected that one special person in the crowd had marked her for death. Obviously she had made no preparation for leaving the area —she had just left.

All this presented the Ives family with a problem, because there had to be washdays. Actually it was Bertha's problem and was somewhat easier for her to solve because she was as tall as Mrs. Carpenter. She could lend the woman a clean dress while the soiled one was washed. However, Bartha had only two dresses, one for everyday and one for church. Even by switching clothes the best she could, she sometimes had to wash at night, under cover of darkness.

Although Loren and Bertha admitted to each other that the visitor was somewhat of a nuisance, they treated her politely. Bertha, of course, was inconvenienced most. This was because Mrs. Carpenter was no help with the housework, cooking, or caring for the children. Since she had been the Woods' housekeeper she must have known something of things required in the Ives household, but she paid no attention to them. She just watched the road and drank coffee.

All efforts to prosecute Colonel Wood's killer were fruitless. The Hay Meadows matter was closed. The Woodsdale paper reported that the whole thing was over.

The next time Loren went to town, after that news came, Mrs. Carpenter went with him. She boarded a train and was gone without a goodbye or a backward glance.

THE Ives hadn't told their Woodsdale friends, with whom they sometimes corresponded, that Mrs. Carpenter was with them, but after she was gone they asked those friends if she had come back to Stevens County. She hadn't. She had hidden with the Ives family until she felt safe from whatever it was that frightened her, then she vanished.

She had endangered the lives of the family, because they might have been killed if someone had found her there and suspected she had told her hosts some damaging facts. As a person she didn't rate high in consideration for others.

Will Kier didn't know what doubts might be yet in the minds of Hugoton gunmen. They had questioned him at length about what he saw at the hay meadow so he should be past suspicion, but was he? At night he stretched a rope around his dugout home, fixing a noisemaker which would alarm if the rope was touched. However, neither he nor his wife slept in their bed. They slept outside and in widely separated spots, so that if one were shot, the other would be warned and could escape.

Horsemen meeting on the road in the area kept their guns cocked as they drew close to each other and, when they passed each looked backward, still with guns cocked until they were too far apart for a bullet to cover the distance between them.

Mrs. Carpenter might have been right about hiding—with coffee to help keep her alert.

☆

Author's note: Bertha and Loren Ives, my parents, have been dead more than thirty years, and Will Kier, my uncle who hauled the bodies through Hugoton, has been gone longer than that. Doctor Voorhees attended the birth of my oldest brother and also Uncle Will's first child. The doctor's home was surrounded by buffalo skulls he had gathered up when making sick calls.

Among my parents' keepsakes is an old letter from their good friends, the Walkers. It was written years after the county seat fight but points up the fact that no one who lived in Woodsdale ever forgot those troubled times. I did not include the letter in the story because,

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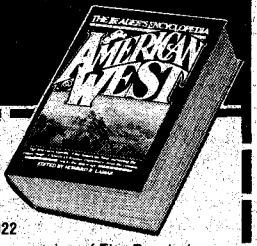

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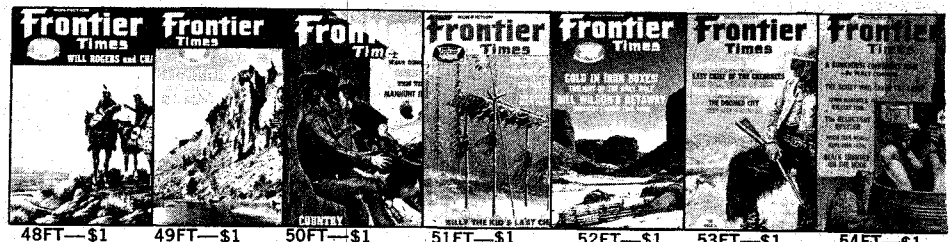
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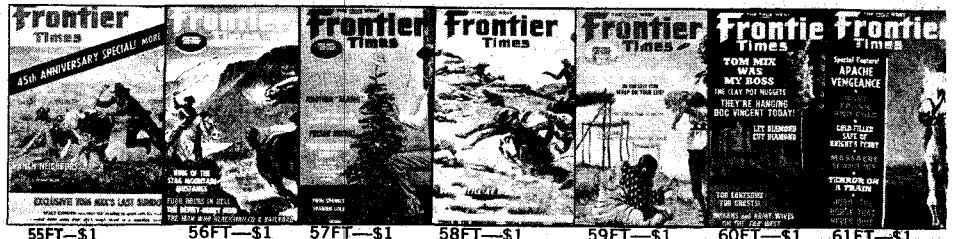
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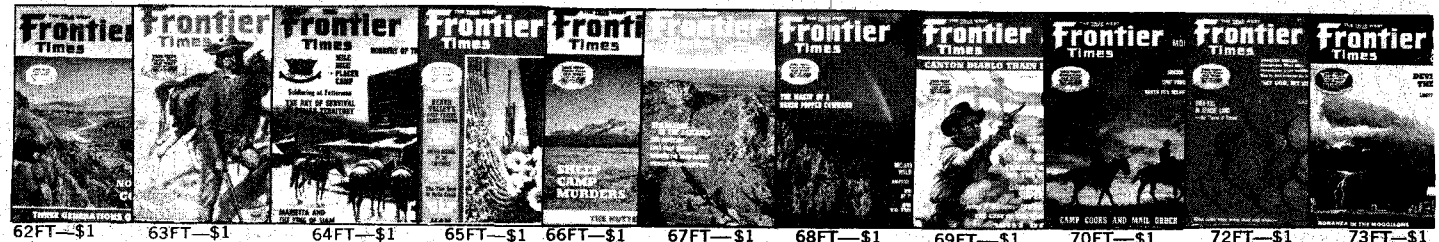
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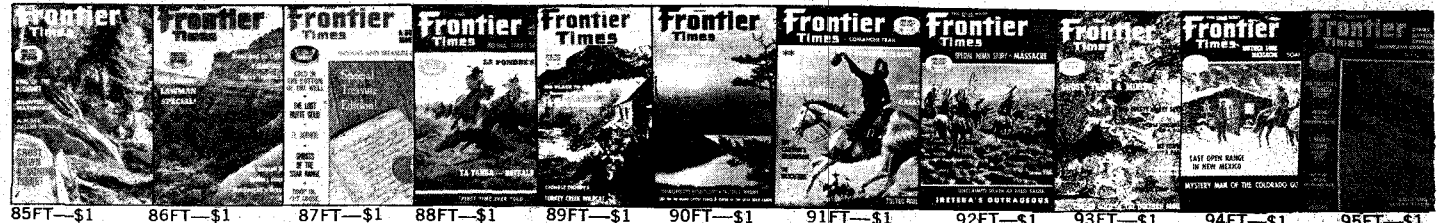
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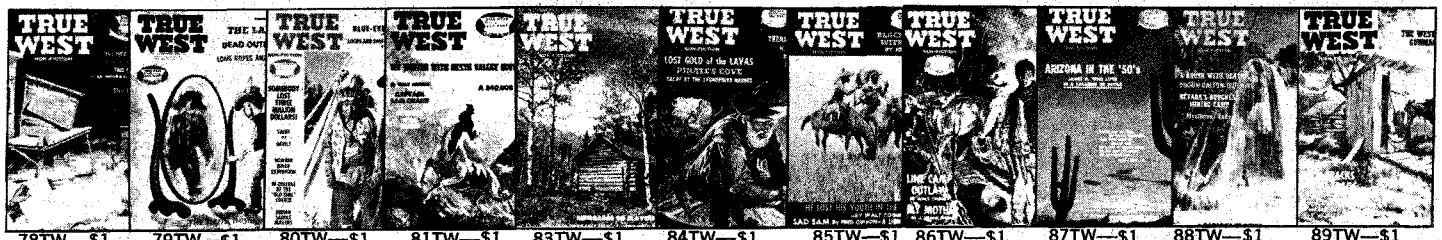

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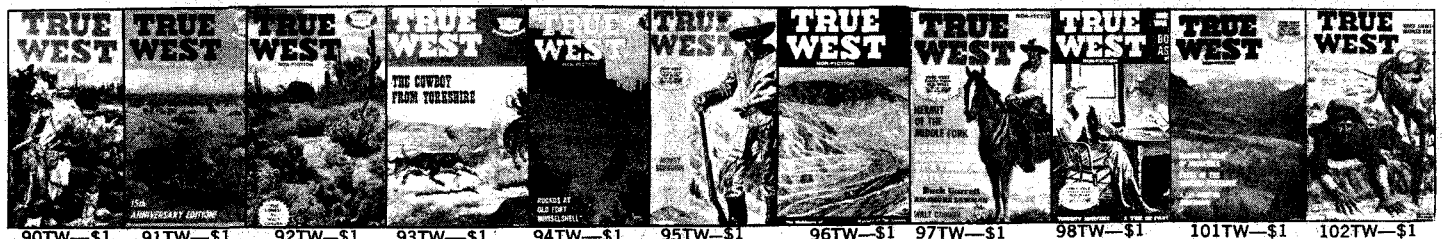

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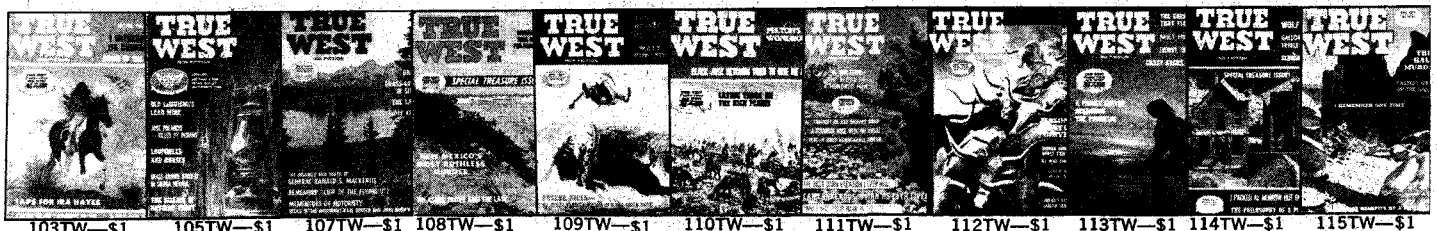

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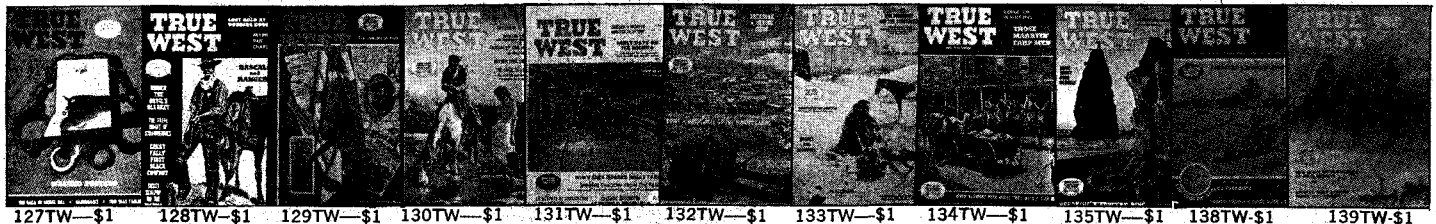

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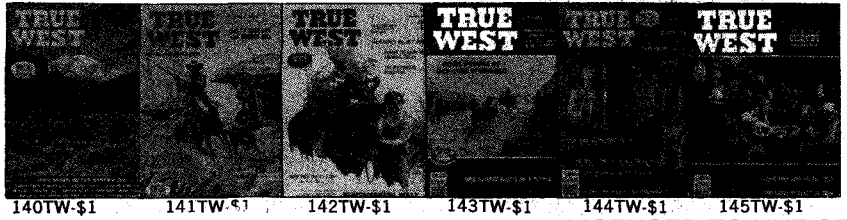

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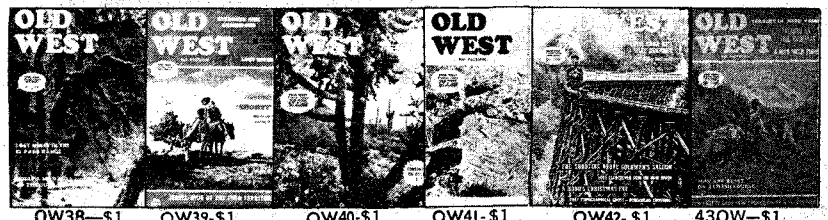

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likely, only old-time settlers in that area would find it interesting.

"Temple, California, March 7, 1928

"To L. J. Ives and W. M. Keir and their families.
"Shamrock, Oklahoma
"Dear Old Friends:

"You can hardly imagine our surprise on opening the mail today and finding a letter sent by our daughter Mabel, bearing the signature of Nell Ives.

"I had made numerous attempts to get in touch with some of you but was never able to get any trace whatever. I wrote to Wellington and had a nephew residing near there to keep on the lookout for the name. Failing there I watched the Sumner County list in the State Picnics which are held regularly here twice a year but no one seemed to have heard of the name. There are quite a number of former Kansans here and we have often wondered what had become of you. Now, when we had made up our minds that you were lost, the unexpected happens.

"Thirty-four years have elapsed since we last met, and it has been nearly that length of time since we had definite word from you. Radical changes have taken place and life has brought to us the usual portion of rewards and disappointments, but with it all we have enjoyed good health, the real necessities of life, kind neighbors and plenty of good friends wherever our lot has been cast. We are now in our 67th year and able to work as usual and take an active interest in neighborhood happenings and the current events of the world. We have not accumulated much of this world's goods but with good health, a cheerful disposition and our ever dutiful and ever thoughtful daughter ready to meet any of our needs, we consider ourselves fortunate.

"I will not attempt to give you a full account of our wanderings since we left you. That will have to be left for a later time. We came here at Mabel's request nearly nine years ago.

"There are plenty of Stevens County, Kansans here. W. P. McClure and his whole family reside at Whittier, California, about 15 miles from us, and H. F. Adams and wife are at Pomona, 25 miles from here. We spent the day with them a week ago. They are getting quite old but are in good health. Lena Kilgore and her sister Merta Kyes are here. Both the Kilgores are dead. Albert's widow resided at Seattle, Washington and her son is there also. Adams' oldest boy is there also. J. W. (Wurt) Webb is here but in very poor health. Bob Kinsey who resided in the sand hills between Woodsdale and Hugoton is here, also one of the La Heys whom you will probably recall as a visitor at the "kicking corner" when he came to Woodsdale. They had claims in the northeast corner of the county.

"A year ago at the State Picnic I wrote cards to all I could get track of and urged their attendance. We had 42 present, many of them young persons who have grown up since we left. Alice Rhodes,

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now married to a Mr. Pickerel, is here. Several years ago James Gerrond who is still residing at Hugoton asked Mabel to try to locate Sam Robinson's wife so as to get trace of the Rhodes baby the Robinsons adopted in January 1887. When Sam was sent to the Colorado pen, Mrs. Robinson disappeared. The other Rhodes children when they grew up were very anxious to get in touch with her but were never able to learn anything of her after they left—soon after Sam was arrested in Colorado.

"Our daughter Mabel started on the search to find whether Sam was still living, as he is still liable for murder. No trace of him could be definitely found after he got out of the pen in 1898, but Mrs. Robinson was located in Indiana. The Rhodes girl had never known but what she was the daughetr of the Robinsons until the officers informed her and she got in touch with the other Rhodes children.

"One of the younger girls of John Cross and the youngest son of Perry Carpenter live in Los Angeles. We have corresponded with them but never met them. Mr. Hamilton who resided northeast of Woodsdale is at Tucson, Arizona. Herbert Tonny and his mother and all his brothers except one, George L. Tonny, are dead. George is at San Francisco and expects to visit us sometime this spring. I have never met him and got in touch with him through the paper. He has proposed that we get together and make up a history of the Stevens County pioneer days and the persons connected therewith.

"I have done some correspondence about it, and especially with Jim Gerrond who is out there and in full touch with all the events and characters. He is not very sanguine of the success, as he says the old prejudice among the Hugoton crowd is still there if anything is stirred up. Mabel sent me all the tracings that the secret service did to find Sam Robinson, which covered some 15 or 18 states. The interviews were sent me and it was surprising how many of the old crowd—what few are yet living—persisted in the original story of a fight, and the Woodsdale people being the aggressors. It is hardly believable that men would insist on falsehoods, when there was not a single Woodsdale act that they established to show we were not law-abiding.

"Jim sent me the Hugoton *Hermes* for about two years. Year before last they had an enormous wheat crop. They have plowed up everything for wheat, but the uncertainty of rain still continues. Broomcorn is one of the dependable crops and the sorghums continue to usually make the feed. With the dairy interest and the market for seed and feed, farmers are managing to get ahead and an occasional wheat crop makes them a big boost. Of late they have been prospecting for oil and gas and I have heard gas has been found in paying quantities, but I have not had any authentic information.

"Al Dunmire is at Wichita. His wife died last fall. Bessie Currey lives there also and has a family of grown children. Florence Wells Metz is in Chicago, has one daughter, and used to operate a music school.

"Lest I tell all I know this time and have nothing left for the second sitting I will close until I get a report from you people. I am writing this jointly and you will please pass it along. With best wishes to you all, we await a long letter. —Your friends, D. W. and Myrtle E. Walker."

Shingle Mill Country

(Continued from page 23)

the house, and they usually did.

I was big enough now to get into trouble with these people. One day when I was twelve I was with Mom when she stopped for a visit at the home of Mrs. Ross Dolan. Two Gypsy women were already there, a woman about thirty and a girl, thirteen. Mrs. Dolan didn't want her fortune told and was encouraging them to leave.

Just then I saw the woman slip a dinner plate into her wide coat pocket. The plate went clear down to her ankle in that pocket. I was standing right behind the girl when I saw her stoop over to search the sewing-machine drawers.

It was the best opportunity I ever had and I pinched her a good one. She yelped, whirled and turned her blazing eyes upon me. I was about to hit her when the woman lunged toward me with a pair of scissors drawn in her hand. I had no intention of dodging so I kicked her as hard as I could in the stomach, and she fell backward to the floor. Both Gypsies then flashed through the doorway and started walking down the street at a fast clip.

My mother told Dad about it that evening. He closed a book he was reading and said he didn't know I was capable of that behavior. When I told him I didn't know it either, he opened his book and started reading again.

Sheriff Oscar Brazil heard about the incident, too, and went to the Gypsy camp. He told them to get out of town and they did. The next day a bunch of us kids went out to play on the abandoned campground. While there, I was standing around talking to a lady we all knew when a man came up and shot her with a pistol.

IT HAPPENED like this: Though she was twenty-five and separated from her husband, the lady was really still a girl. She had black hair and black eyes, was educated, courteous, and real pretty. She had come into Perryville that day in a wagon with some other people from Cherry Hill where she lived. They drove through the town square and were camped that afternoon at the Gypsy campground.

Two brothers, aged twenty-eight and twenty-nine, saw them and followed the wagon. The girl was still sitting on the spring seat when one of them shot her. The bullet went under her arm-pit, did some damage but was not fatal. Evidently it was a case of jealousy.

Sheriff Brazil soon picked up the two brothers and sent a deputy after me because I was the oldest kid at the scene. When a man at the courthouse asked me

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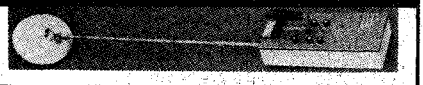

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"Who shot the woman?" I told him.

On March 29, 1915, the grand jury met at Perryville and made the charge against him of assault with intent to kill. On August 7, 1916, two years after the shooting incident, the case came up for trial at Perryville. M. A. Dunnaway was the prosecutor and W. H. Hamm Bowen was attorney for the defense. In January 1916 we had moved to the little town of Casa, on the west side of Perry County, so when no witnesses appeared, the case was a *nol prosequi*, and the defendant went free. The judge then directed that he be reimbursed by Perry County for the expense he had been out including that of his attorney's fee! Re: Law book D, page 462, Perry County Clerk's office.

AT FIRST SIGHT we felt that the Casa area was a garden, a teenager's paradise, and it was in those years, but a snake was in that garden. Beginning in the fall of 1918, a plague called Spanish influenza spread all over the country, our part of the world included. Somebody died at almost every house, and in some cases whole families died.

Dr. French came to our house every day for two weeks. But one day when he came he said it was for the last time. "The boy is dead," was the verdict he gave my mother.

Two months later when Dad was in town the doctor asked, "Where did you bury the boy?"

Dad's answer so stunned Dr. French that he sent word for me to come to his house for dinner. While there I heard Mrs. French ask, "Is this the boy you pronounced dead?"

"Yes," he replied, "and it is still a mystery."

Despite the town's misfortune, Casa was still a thriving community. Our business houses included two fancy drugstores and two first-rate hotels, the Johnson and the Harris. I was more interested in the Harris establishment because the elderly Reverend Charles Harris was my great friend—not because I associated with religion; I didn't, not at that time.

There were no street lights in town and the nights were sometimes very black. Stores closed at 9:00 in the evening. Saturday, December 21, 1918 was one of those darkest of nights, and sleet was falling. Inside the Harris store a glowing coal heater was very inviting to moochers looking for some warmth. The Harris Hotel quarters were upstairs over the big store.

Two drummers staying overnight, two local loafers, a traveling man well versed in ancient history, and I were drawn around the stove. The two drummers, when they could edge in, were telling yarns.

Then another man, a stranger, walked in damp and cold, looking for a room for the night. There was no vacancy. The stranger slumped, looked downcast and started to leave.

At that, Reverend Harris called to him and said, "There's one room upstairs with two beds. A woman is already in one of the beds but if you can behave yourself, like being quiet, you may sleep there."

The man, now jubilant, retired. Thirty minutes later he came rattling down the stairs frightened out of his wits. Sputtering a bit, he looked at Reverend Harris and said, "That woman is dead up there! Didn't you know that?"

"Yes," replied the Reverend, "she died this morning. Sure, I knew she was dead but how did you know it?"

WHEN I was discharged from the army medical department right after World War I, I brought home some hypodermic needles, one syringe and a few vials of morphine tablets from the dispensary that was being abandoned at Camp Pike.

Dad's farm was a long distance from town, in an area we then called the "bush country." It soon developed that a neighbor, Charley Melton, had a sick cow and called upon me to give the critter a shot of morphine, which I did. The cow got up and grazed around a few days and then died.

Two weeks later Charley himself came down with severe pain which the doctors in Casa diagnosed as gallstones. The Meltons again came for me to give Charley a shot of morphine, as I had done for the cow. I demurred but they demanded. Well, the several Melton families did have some pretty girls among them; maybe I should help out a neighbor.

As it turned out, Charley rested well, and not for the next fifty-five years did he ever have another pain. Obviously the man did not have gallstones in the first place, but I leave that diagnosis to the medical profession.

Soon after that needle work I went West to work on the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch near Ponca City, Oklahoma—not as a cowboy but as a regular farm-ranch hand. I liked Joe, George and Zack Miller and visited some with Bill Pickett, the black cowboy.

Many blanket Indians lived here and there on the 101. But there was one, Iron Horse and his family, who dressed in conventional clothing. Iron Horse was not a chief, but was hailed as a chief when traveling with the 101 Wild West Show. Among the Iron Horse kids there was one girl my age who was a real beauty. She was intelligent and certainly tempting. She was always smiling in my direction, and never smiled like that for anyone else that I could discover. Why did she do it when I could never get closer than twenty feet of her at any time? If I tried to move in, she just glided deeper into her own crowd of female associates where I didn't dare to enter. I tried to be adult about it and almost made it, but finally gave up, saddled up, and went drooping back toward Dad's old bush country homestead in Yell County, arKansas.

Infidelity at Old Fort Laramie

(Continued from page 25)

and intended putting in the flower seed yesterday but it rained so I could not

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work outdoors. If I have good luck with them I will send you just as pretty a bouquet as I am capable of making, I don't want you should see those I send you, I want you should come up and see them all.

It is storming today and it makes it rather lonly and dreary. I dont suppose you are matching nickles today are you, but I wish you were up here to take dinner with us today. Jim went back the same day you went home but I look for him home again most eny day as he has got to come up and see about the trees he is having set on his tree clame. I think I shall go to church tonight. I here we are to have a minister from Cheyenne to talk to us poor sinners this morning and evening.

And now as I have nothing new to write, will not tire you with my noncence and now hoping you will make us another visit soon I will bid you goodby

Ever the same
Your little friend Delia

THE following letter, written in a childish scrawl on lined paper with pencil, by nine-year-old Roy, indicates that Anna did get to Fort Laramie and that a little girl resulted from the visit. It also shows that Johnnie is no longer with the family. It is probable that one of the unmarked children's graves in Fort Laramie is that of frail little Johnnie.

Oakland, California
March 18th, 1889

Dear Pappa,

I received your kind letter. I was very glad to hear from you indeed.

Today is Mamma's birthday. Mamma is sick in bed and she can hardly breathe. I wish we were going to Alabama with you. I am sorry you are going so far away. The reason I dont like California is because I have no home. No one seems to want us children around. Aunt May is verry mean to us. I am trying verry hard to learn my lessons so that I can go to work and make a home for us. Alta's getting better of the whooping cough.

Alta and I was very glad to get a dollar. We are having a little vacation from school. I dont know what to buy because I want so many things. Me and Alta sends our love to you.

From your loveing son
Roy Benton

The last letter was written in a firm confident hand. Whatever heartbreak there had been was long over.

Fresno
Jan 24th 1892

Mr. Matt Benton,

Will you please send me some money for the children, they are very much in need of clothes and school supplies. I have not received any help from you for the children for over a year and would not ask for it, if they could get along without it.

Alta and Roy send their love to you, and wish to be remembered.

Anna L. Benton

Zane Grey's Mysterious Guide

(Continued from page 27)

Tappan's Burro, was undoubtedly modeled after Sivert Nielsen. A quote is all one needs to see the similarity between Nielsen and Tappan. Grey wrote: "Tappan, if he had any calling, was a prospector. But the lure of gold did not bind him to this wandering life any more than the freedom of it. He had never made a rich strike. About the best he could ever do was dig enough gold to grubstake himself for another prospecting trip into some remote corner of the American Desert. Tappan knew the arid Southwest from San Diego to the Pecos River. . . . Few prospectors had the strength and endurance of Tappan. He was a giant in build, and at thirty-five had never yet reached the limit of his physical force." A movie was later made of this story.

Nielsen was also the model for Laramie Nelson, a character who ran through a number of books written by Grey.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of the guide's disappearance in 1924 are intriguing. Zane Grey's two sons, Romer and Loren, have mentioned that Nielsen told their father about a lost gold mine in Mexico which he thought he could find if Grey would sponsor the expedition. This Grey agreed to do, but first went on a fishing trip to the East Coast.

When Grey returned, he sought out Nielsen, but could not find him. Private detectives were hired to see if they could turn up any clue to his whereabouts.

They traced Nielsen to Tijuana, a small border town in Mexico just across the line from California. Here the trail ended. The detectives reported a man answering the guide's description may have been killed by revolutionaries in an insurrection going on in Baja California at that time, but this was all they could uncover.

To Grey, losing Nielsen was like losing a brother. Said Frank Gruber in his biography of the author: "Grey missed his loyal friend grievously. He had been greatly attached to him and several times in later years he recalled that Nielsen had twice saved his life at the risk of his own."

The puzzle of where Nielsen went in 1924, was pieced together when his sister mailed me a copy of a letter sent to a brother after Nielsen's death in 1960. In it, Harry W. Horton, an attorney in El Centro, California, discussed his 51-year friendship with Sivert Nielsen. Horton had first met him in 1909, when Nielsen hiked to a mine operated by Horton's father in Baja California.

They were close friends for several years until young Horton decided to go to college. Then the two lost track of each other and did not renew their friendship until 1925. From that time on they visited every few years until Nielsen's death. Horton died in 1966.

Horton's partner, Reginald Knox, picks up the thread at this point. Knox said of Nielsen in a letter written to me on December 1, 1972: "To me Sivert was a very fascinating person, as he had been many places and always had tales to tell

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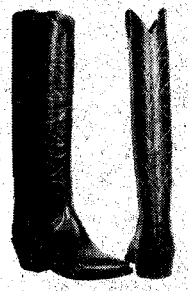

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about his experiences. I liked him very much." Knox met Nielsen in 1940 and said that Horton, Nielsen, and himself made several camping trips through the years in the mountains of Baja California.

Knox wrote that Horton and Nielsen took a memorable three months' journey by Model A Ford to the southern tip of Baja California and returned in 1932. This was probably an epic journey, as until recently there was only a semblance of a road stretching the full length of the Baja California peninsula.

Knox expressed surprise that Zane Grey was unable to locate Nielsen, since Nielsen used the Melling Ranch as a base for most of his life. The ranch is a resort 120 miles south of the town of Ensenada.

As far as can be determined, Nielsen seldom mentioned knowing Zane Grey, and never told anyone why he chose not to communicate with the author after 1924. Concerning the gold mine he had mentioned to Grey, was there ever such a mine? Only Nielsen could answer that question and he took the secret with him.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 3)

is outstanding. Please forward the enclosed letter to Lee. I worked on the Mexican border with him.—Dave Hopkins, Box 332, Camp Verde, Arizona 86322

Yikes! Two More Wide Open Banks

I have just finished reading the April *True West*. I enjoy all of your magazines but thought this issue was unusually good. Since I can't send my copy around to all my friends and relatives I am ordering copies to be sent to a few people who might like to read it.

The reference to the closing of so many banks ("The West's First Subway" October 1977) brought to mind the small town of Garfield, Washington located about half-way between Spokane and Lewiston, Idaho. My father's sister had lived at Garfield and later moved to Spokane. Just before the great bank crash she came down to Garfield and spent several hours one day trying to talk my father into removing his savings out of this small bank and putting it into the "Old National Bank" of Spokane (a large institution), but he never did move his money—just left it in this small bank. Later the Old National didn't make it and the small bank in Garfield did—and is still going.

It seems to me there were just a few of the smaller banks that kept open. They were probably well managed.—Mrs. Pauline Merrill, 16190 W. Perrydale Road, Sheridan, Oregon 97378

☆ ☆ ☆

Regarding your October 1977 article titled "The West's First Subway" stating the Eureka's Farmers and Merchants Bank was the only one in the nation that didn't close its doors, I would like to say that the Laotto Farmers and Merchants Bank was the only one in our immediate area that did not close its doors.

Laotto is a small town of 400 people, located 15 miles north of Fort Wayne, Indiana. Many banks in our area did close, freezing the funds of a lot of people who had trusted their savings to their banks. But our cashier was a two-fisted gentleman who made only sound loans and managed to keep the bank solvent.

One other thing about the cashier I would like to mention was his successful idea about not being robbed by the many gangsters who were working the Midwest at this time. The most famous of them was John Dillinger. His gang did rob the Huntertown bank which is only four miles south of Laotto. They also went into the Auburn police station and took the guns and ammunition. Auburn is about nine miles east of Laotto and is known world-wide as the home of the Auburn and Dusenberg classic cars.

Floyd Gause, our banker and cashier, who incidentally ran the bank single-handed without the aid of a computer and a whole covey of bookkeepers, devised a rope and pulley arrangement that extended from his cage up to the ceiling and over and down to the front door. There it was attached to the door latch. Any customer who wanted to enter the bank had merely to knock on the door. Floyd would look out from his cage and if he knew you, he would reach up and pull the rope to unlatch the door, which would then close and lock itself. As further insurance in case a hood would slip in with a customer, Mr. Gause had a .38 Colt lying below the cashier's window within a few inches of his hands. I might add at this time he was a crack shot with rifle or pistol and our little community came through the Depression without incident.

The Laotto Farmers and Merchants Bank is now located in a new building and serves a wide area in this community. A large portrait of Floyd A. Gause oversees the lobby.— R. D. Cartwright, P. O. Box 77, Laotto, Indiana 46763

More About Unwanted Mail

I have just finished reading Mrs. E. M. Ritter's letter on misuse of the "Trails Grown Dim" Department on page 64 of the February *True West*.

I had the similar experience when my query was published in 1977. I was flooded with religious tracts, written 8-page letters giving me God's word, and inviting me to attend their religious meetings. I also received letters from handicapped people either wanting to sell me a subscription to their "Newsletters," sell me genealogy items, and requesting all my used greeting cards.

I was so frustrated and angry after a barrage of this "junk" that I very nearly threw away the only legitimate piece of information I received.

My signature in "Trails Grown Dim" was not my normal one, never has been, so when I began receiving this barrage, I knew from whence it came.

I did not write you then, as I supposed the list of names were sold by your company. Then I realized that if you sold your subscription lists, my regular name would appear.

I could only assume then that people

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buy the magazines and use the names and addresses for their own purposes. But one letter on which I very uncharitably unleashed my anger and frustration brought an apology with the notation that they "Got the magazine then and read the article," after which I was sent a list of names from a phone book. So—is someone furnishing a list of names in each "Trails Grown Dim" to a regular clientele?

I did not write you, because, frankly, what can you do? There is nothing you can do to forestall anyone from buying your magazines and using our names and addresses. Once we agree to publication of same in your columns, we are open to all sorts of letters—it's the risk we take in our hope for information.

I write now only to back up Mrs. Ritter's complaint. It happens, believe me. Good luck in '78. I enjoy all your magazines.—N. J. Crowell (address withheld).

Mystery Solved?

I read "The Secret of Tonto National Forest" by Ralph A. Fisher, Sr. in the April 1977 *True West* (page 46) and wrote to the Forest Service in Arizona but I've never received a reply.

I believe the person who is in that grave is my great-uncle, Perry Gregg, who died at the age of twenty but we don't know where. The Gregg boys, Perry and John, may have been in the Indian wars, as was my grandfather, but may have been seeking their fortune when Perry died.

John went on to make a fortune in Canada where he married an Indian girl. They had one daughter and the wife died in Canada. John struck it rich on finding some mineral (not gold). He made provisions for his daughter and retired to Miami, Florida. He invested in the stock market and lost everything in the big crash. He returned to Canada where he hit the big one again and retired the second time to Miami where he lived until his death in his nineties. John made trips to Oregon several times to see his sister, Urania Jane. She died at age ninety-two. Everyone called her Aunt Jane, as she wouldn't tell her name was Urania.

My great-grandfather crossed the Plains in 1852, settling in Sherwood, Oregon. My great-grandmother died and was buried on the banks of the Platte River. We don't know the site as white people tried to hide their graves. She died of cholera, as did several others on that large train. They had three children, Urania Jane age 7, Perry age 5, and John about 3.

On reaching Oregon they settled in the Willamette Valley (Sherwood) where my grandmother helped keep house and raise her brothers, John and Perry. My Great-grandfather Gregg farmed and also worked in Oregon City, coming home on weekends packing flour, sugar and other necessities on his back.

My grandmother, Urania Jane Gregg, married James Edward McConnell. They had five children, Lawrence, Mary, Stella, Orin John (my father) and Lily.

James Edward McConnell became sick while fighting the Indian wars and died young, leaving my grandmother to again raise a family alone.

I also was born in Sherwood as were two brothers and a sister. Three other sisters were born in other places in Oregon.

My grandmother used to tell how she and her brothers hid when they saw Indians on the trails, but after she grew up she said she knew the Indians saw them but never looked their way.

While crossing the Plains (the wagon-train was large) the train split up with some going on to Utah. One of my great-aunts married a Mormon and went to Utah. The train ahead of them was attacked by Indians and all were killed. Everything was burned, as that was the usual way the Indians got rid of the white man's belongings.

I hope this clears up the mystery of "The Secret of Tonto National Forest," and I hope on one of our trips to see the grave.—Mrs. Edna Jane Bray, Star Route, Bodega Bay, California 94923

Henry Brown's Rifle

A Winchester rifle, said to be one of the most historic in existence, has been acquired by the Kansas State Historical Society.

The gold and silver inlaid Model 1873 Winchester rifle originally belonged to Kansas marshal/outlaw Henry Brown. The gun has long been sought by the Society and it is now returned to Kansas through the generosity of the James H. Woods Foundation of St. Louis.

R. L. Wilson of Hadlyme, Connecticut, an authority on Western firearms and honorary curator of firearms for the Society, said the gun is one of the most interesting and historic of Winchester arms and "stands as a classic collector's item-museum piece from the American West's most wild and woolly days."

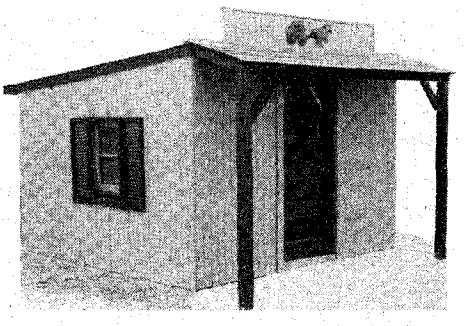
The story of Henry Brown's rifle reads more like fiction than fact. Brown, a gunfighter who had been with Billy the Kid in New Mexico, settled down in Caldwell, Kansas in 1882 and within six months as the town's marshal had brought peace to the Kansas cowtown's dangerous streets.

It was common practice in the Old West to hire killers to keep other killers in line. But Caldwell citizens had real reason to rejoice in their head lawman who had become an exemplar of virtue. He did not drink, gamble, smoke or chew tobacco, and he even married a local girl and bought a home. In appreciation for his services the town presented Brown with the engraved gun in January 1883.

A little over a year later the marshal—and one-time outlaw—turned outlaw again. He used that same gun in an attempted bank robbery in nearby Medicine Lodge. Resisting the robbers, the bank's cashier and president were murdered. Brown was captured with his three companions, one of whom was his own assistant city marshal, and later was killed as he tried to escape from a lynch mob.

According to Wilson the Brown rifle is valuable for a number of technical reasons, but of prime importance, the "pedigree" is impeccable. The history of the gun is well documented beginning with

(Continued on page 61)



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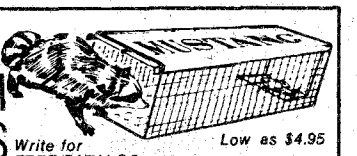

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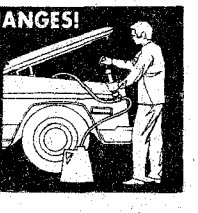

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The Soldier's Farewell

(Continued from page 30)

was the unique type of funeral given at a frontier post when the body was to be shipped elsewhere for burial.

The excellent 4th Infantry band provided muted background music. Aside from their weekly concerts in front of headquarters, there was little exercise for the band except for these funerals. All were good musicians. Somewhere down the line they had learned a number of Tschaikovsky's classics. For funerals they reserved the slower measures of the "Fifth Symphony."

THE BAND stood alongside a transport wagon whose two black mules had crepe streamers from the hames and bridles. The deceased's squad, as was customary, carried the casket out and placed it in the back of the wagon. When they formed up, right behind, there was a symbolic gap in the front rank.

Soon the rest of the company filed out to the muffled drums, and assumed formation. The slow mournful measures of the "Fifth Symphony" could be heard as the band left the Post Chapel across the road from the hospital where so much research had been done on yellow fever. The strains of the symphony became as much a paean of triumph as a slow, measured dirge as the musicians proceeded westward along the length of the parade ground and made the turn in front of headquarters to the post gate.

Here the band switched to music that they needed no printed score to follow, "Aloha." (Not many people of our generation know that the song "Aloha Oe," or more commonly called plain "Aloha," is a Christian hymn written by the deeply religious last Queen of Hawaii, Queen Liliuokalani. It begins: "Christ the Lord came down from Heaven's glory. . . .")

A good long block from the gate was the beginning of old Battle Row. The men on the sidewalks were Rangers, ranchers, cowhands and townspeople. There were few women. Off came the hats—big sombreros, ten-gallon Stetson's, a few Homburgs and derbies. This was the last gesture of respect that they could give the fallen one who had fought their battle.

It was a good chance that some of those Rangers paid off scores very soon, and were not very particular if they got the right man.

In front of Crixell's Saloon, where stood George Head's open Stoddard-Gates automobile with the red leather seats gleaming, and banker McGary's 1910 Pierce Arrow, the column of musicians swung to the left for the short walk to the end of the tracks where a train waited. As the band passed the rear of the train one of the pair of expert trumpeters fell out and waited while the rest of the formation marched to the head of the train. All fell silent for the prayer of Chaplain Chenoweth as the flag-draped casket was lifted into place inside the baggage-car. There was no firing squad, since this was a shipping instead of a burial.

Their rendition of "Taps" was the arrangement usually reserved for generals: "Echo Taps." Two master trumpeters had to read each other's minds in order to execute this difficult number. Every two or three notes the first trumpet would hesitate while the far trumpet would echo; then the next notes were played to the hesitation while the echo returned; this went on until the last echo was strikingly muted on the last note—and that last note was prolonged.

The recessional was a trumpet solo of "Aloha," with a muffled drum and empty transport wagon accompanying. The drum alone broke the stillness inside the gate until the formation was dismissed in front of the flagpole at the east end of the parade ground.

A comrade had received his last farewell. That was what it was like on the Texas-Mexican Border some sixty years ago.

One Man's Rubble—Another Man's Gold

(Continued from page 33)

hausted carcasses were carted off to the boneyard. . . ."

Due to this excessive mortality rate, contractors increased the wages for teamsters with horses and wagons.

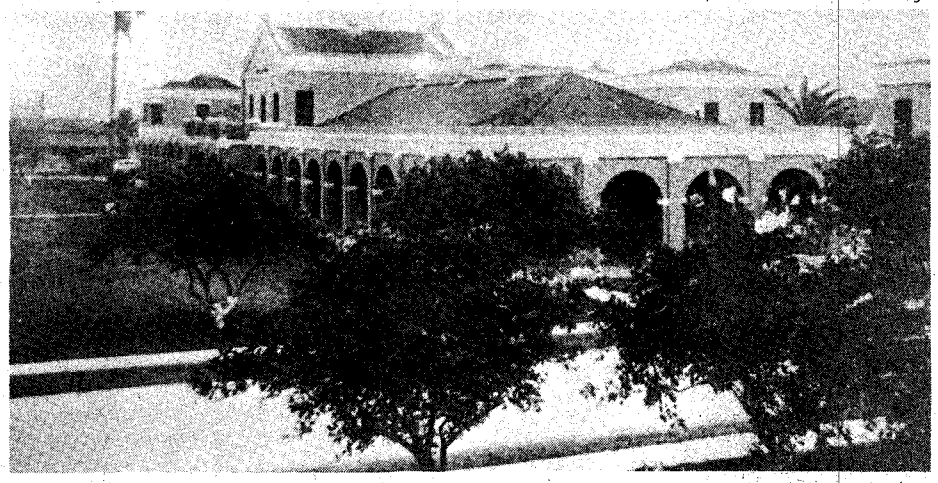
In July 1906, the debris cleaners organized to demand $2.50 per eight-hour day instead of the $1.72 to $2.00 they were presently taking home for a nine-hour stint.

E. P. Erwin, in *Overland Monthly*, in his tirade against unions, described a typical union leader as "a self-seeking demagogue who cares not for San Francisco, but merely for himself." The tirade was followed by: "The workman gets only that which the richer and more powerful holdup man leaves; and between welching insurance companies and extortionate demands of the lumbermen and the purveyors of other materiel necessary for the city's rehabilitation, there is not much left for the smaller robbers to take."

Nevertheless these unattached, hard-working young men—Charly and Joe Biggs; their cousin Sam Biggs; Willfred, George, and Jack Yost; Chuck Cole; and Ray Shaver—finding the rubble in San Francisco a virtual gold mine, returned a second summer to work their claim.

The Fort Brown Post hospital, where the yellow fever experiments of General Gorgas began.

Courtesy Texas Southmost College



Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 5)

C., and Elijah were living with the Thomas Fisher family in Milam County. Eli Hardcastle's family moved to Medina County, and Cornelius Smith's family lived in Goliad and Atascosa counties. The Fowlers are said to have gone to Williamson County, but the Worcesters' and Loftins' whereabouts in Texas is unknown.

We three who are attempting to trace this family are anxious to hear from any descendants of any of these family members or from anyone who has any information concerning them. We will answer all letters and share our information with those who desire it.—Mrs. Richard A. Blackman, 1003 Brock Drive, Killeen, Texas 76541

Lancaster-Thatcher-Hays-Pendergrass-Hillian

Delaney Lancaster was born February 10, 1821 in Madison County, Kentucky. He was first married to Margaret Ann(?) on December 16, 1841. Margaret Ann was born July 20, 1823. I would like to learn her maiden name and where she was born. They had two daughters. Miralda was born February 12, 1843, probably in Daviess County, Kentucky. Mary Liza was born June 2, 1845. Delaney Lancaster's wife and daughters all died within three weeks of each other. Mary Liza on July 24; Margaret Ann on August 14; Miralda on August 15, 1845.

Delaney and his second wife, Sarah Ann Thatcher, were married in 1847 in Plattsburg, Missouri. Delaney and his brother, Green Berry Lancaster, were bitten by the gold bug, and in 1849 Delaney left Sarah Ann with his father-in-law, John Thatcher (Thatcher's wife was Nancy Hays, a granddaughter of Daniel Boone) in Plattsburg. They left by wagontrain for the California gold fields. He and his brother settled at Coloma, California.

By 1851 Delaney had made his stake, and he caught a boat for home via Panama. He walked across the isthmus and boarded a boat for Cuba, and from there to Florida. The first night ashore he was robbed of all his gold. He made his way to the mouth of the Mississippi,

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and then upriver to the Missouri River. He arrived home broke.

In 1852 Delaney, his wife Sarah Ann, and baby daughter Emma left for the wilds of Franklin County, Arkansas, where he planned to homestead some land. In 1859 the family "starved out" and went back to Plattsburg, Missouri. They remained there until after the Civil War.

In 1866 Delaney and his family moved back to the homestead in Arkansas. They fared better this time, and even bought up other pieces of land that adjoined their property. In 1889 he sold out, and his family, along with his sons-in-law, George Nicholson Clampet Pendergrass and family, and Thomas Winfred Hillian and family, moved to Alvord, Texas. Delaney died May 26, 1898 and was buried beside his oldest son, John William Lancaster, in the old Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery in Union Hill, Texas.

I am trying to write the life story of my great-grandfather, Delaney Lancaster, and would appreciate hearing from anyone knowing anything about the above-mentioned people. I will reimburse all postage to folks who answer this appeal.—Dee Willett, 1930 Lucky Street, Bakersfield, California 93307

(Continued on page 64)

Truly Western

(Continued from page 59)

articles in contemporary newspapers at the time of the original presentation. These newspaper accounts even quote the inscription engraved on the gun: "Presented to City Marshall [*sic*] H. N. Brown for valuable services rendered on behalf of the Citizens of CALDWELL, KAS."

In more recent times the story of Brown and his rifle appeared in my book *Why the West Was Wild*, coauthored by Nyle H. Miller. A photograph of the gun taken when it was in the collection of Dr. M. B. Aynesworth of Waco, Texas, appeared in *The Winchester Book* by George Madis. Detailed illustrations will appear in the forthcoming revised edition of R. L. Wilson's *The Book of Winchester Engraving*.

Brown wrote his bride of one month from the Medicine Lodge jail: "I will send you all of my things, and you can sell them, but keep the Winchester." Accounts differ as to the gun's whereabouts over the years between 1884 and its acquisition by Aynesworth. But there is no doubt of its being an interesting footnote to Kansas history. The Historical Society plans to display the gun in its new museum which when completed will have optimum security for exhibition of valuable artifacts such as the Henry Brown rifle.—Joseph W. Snell, Kansas State Historical Society, 10th and Jackson Streets, Topeka, Kansas 66612

Keeping on the Go

The story "Tramp Miners," by Hood River Blackie, was quite a story but I've got it on him in travel as well as years. He claims to be forty-nine years old. I'm crowding seventy. I've been on the road since about 1926 and I still can't find a place that I want to set down in. I just bought a set of new welding equipment but I'll wear it out hauling it around, I'm afraid. Unlike Blackie, I stayed shy of the mines. The shipyards are good jobs and most independent shops are.

But oilfield jobs are no good for a boomer. It used to be that in Mexico a machinist or welder could get a job anytime, and Canada used to be fair, but no more. The Mexicans are getting better educated now and they make good machinists and darn good welders. And in Canada a United States citizen has to have a permit to work up there, and it is hard to get that permit. I know because the last time I was deported the judge told me that the next time I was caught, he was going to send me to jail for a year. I don't want to do a year in a Canadian jail, nor any other one if I can help it. So I stay out of Canada.

I've rode the rails all over North America where there is track layed, and if I was young again I'd go right back to where I left off. It is harder to do now, though, with high-speed engines and centralized traffic control. And the railroad bulls are meaner now too.

I've known some good men and I've seen a lot of phonies. One I can recall as if it happened yesterday: It happened in the jungle in Billings, Montana. There was a little Japanese kid already there when our train pulled into the yards. He had a fire and had coffee made and was frying some meat and potatoes. He had bread and some butter and some money in his pockets.

This big bo had come in on the train I was on, a Milwaukee Electric, and he started in on this Japanese kid and finally kicked his skillet over. That kid used him for a stepladder for about a good half hour. Boy did that big s-o-b take a licking. Then to top that off the Japanese kid took his shoes away from him and threw them in the river. It was cold that day. Then the kid run him out of the jungle. He was a nice kid, too. I have heard it said that there are at least three-hundred bodies buried in that jungle town in Lewiston, Idaho.

I kept out of the deserts. There is nothing out there that I've lost. I could sit here and wear this typewriter out telling about people and places I've seen and things I've heard of and done, but that is water over the dam. If I was young again I'd do the same thing over. I wouldn't change my life one bit.

I have a friend that is a nice guy too. He lives in a house he bought the day he got married and that was fifty-two years ago. That is a long time. But I've never heard of a dissatisfied resident in the cemetery. It seems like it would be awful crowded in a wooden overcoat, and it would be pretty hot in one of these concrete overcoats that they use today that only go down about two feet. I'm not ready for any of them apartments yet.

I buy your magazines in bookstores. I don't stay in one place long enough to subscribe. Maybe some day but not yet. So long and I'll be seeing you.—Ivan Merritt, Swanton, Nebraska 68445

(Continued on following page)

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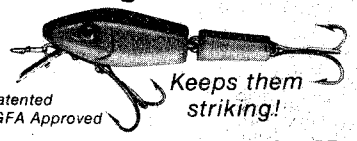

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Remember C. B. Rhodes?

I was just one of hundreds of fellows in the Army who received a three-day pass from Camp Bowie, Texas in October 1942. Rumor had it we were to transfer to Ft. McPherson Georgia and make preparations for heading overseas to England.

Like most of the others, especially those of us married and with families, I was lonesome. The three-day pass was welcome, but it meant little more than being able to go into Dallas and be miserable among strangers, for I well knew there was no chance of getting home to see my family before shipping out, and the prospects were for a long time out of the country.

On the first day of my pass, while strolling around Dallas I came to a park, and if I remember correctly it was a beautiful spot rather close to the hub of the city. Benches were conveniently placed and I sat down to watch the people pass by. Shortly a very erect figure of a man whom I judged to be in his mid-70s approached and asked if he might sit down by me.

We struck up a conversation, he asking me where I was from, what my business had been in civilian life, and all the other chit-chat that goes with making conversation between two strangers.

I asked what his life's work had been, and he said, "Deputy U. S. Marshal." Further inquiry disclosed he was at that time (1942) 88 years old and had joined the Marshals at about 18. He said his name was C. B. Rhodes. I believe Mr. Rhodes said he was from Muskogee, Oklahoma. In the course of conversation he mentioned attending the last reunion of Deputy U. S. Marshals, Indian Territory, at Fort Smith, Arkansas in 1908. I remarked that was one year before I was born.

He mentioned having a picture of that reunion—a print—and that the original had been placed with the State Historical Society in Oklahoma City. A copy was also in the National Archives at Washington, D. C.

I remarked I would sure like to see that picture, and he responded by saying, "I'll give it to you when you go home."

"Mr. Rhodes," I said, "I'm not going home. I'm headed overseas in a few days."

"Well, then," he replied, "give me your home address and I'll send it to you. But why are you interested in seeing this picture?"

My answer was that I had always been interested in Western history and especially in the lives of Marshals and Rangers. My own ancestors had come to Iowa from Connecticut in the early days and I recalled their talk of the frontier.

I saw Mr. Rhodes the next day at the park and he asked me again for my home address. I gave him the name of my daughter and the address. After a little while we parted, and I never saw him again.

In June 1944, almost two years after this meeting and our conversation, a package was delivered to my home. It contained the picture, framed and marked, measuring about one foot high by thirty inches long. It shows in exact detail what Mr. Rhodes had told me. Some men in the picture are standing, some are in a wagon, and others are mounted on horses.

I have often wondered just how colorful a career Mr. Rhodes did have, and if he were noted for any special arrests or pursuits. He didn't comment on that much, when I inquired. He would now be deceased, and I'd like to know where he is buried. In fact, I'd like to hear from someone who knew him from way back when.— R. C. "Pusky" Wilcox, 218 W. First Street, Monticello, Iowa 52310

"What I want to know is, when are them experts gonna git around to improvin' this end of the beef business?"

Western Book Roundup

(Continued from page 37)

story of Hank Blanton is warm and refreshing. It looks at a man who still clings to the days long gone. The story first appeared in the *New Yorker*. The book has 148 pages.

UTAH HISTORY

Someone once said that if a book has universal appeal it is a good book. Unfortunately, too many regional histories lack such appeal. Many are often dry and uninteresting to the outsider, but such is not the case with the second edition of *The Far County: A Regional History of Moab and La Sal, Utah* (Olympus Publishing Co., Two Olympus Plaza, 1670 East 13th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 04105, $12.95) by Faun McConkie Tanner. This book, first published in 1937, has been revised and new material has been added. It is the intriguing story of the people who made history in southeastern Utah. In 20 chapters the author unfolds the story of the region from its creation. She looks at the exploration of the area, early settlement and Indian conflicts. One extremely interesting chapter describes the Pinhook Draw Massacre of 1881 in which thirteen white men and eleven Indians were killed. Another chapter covers the outlaws of the region including Tom Roach, Tom McCarty, Butch Cassidy and Bert Madden. She also explores the relationships between Mormons and the "gentiles." This 360-page book is well-illustrated and includes a good bibliography and index.

INDIAN WARS

Two respected authorities on American Indian history have teamed up to produce *The American Heritage History of the Indian Wars* (distributed by Simon and Schuster, Inc., 630 Fifth Ave., New York N. Y., 10020, $34.95). Robert M. Utley and Wilcomb E. Washburn are the authors of this well-illustrated and comprehensive effort which examines conflicts between the white man and Indians from 1492 until the battle of Wounded Knee. This 352-page book—about 9 x 11 inches in size—includes maps, numerous illustrations in color and black and white, plus many historic photographs. Many examples of Frederic Remington's art are included in the second portion of the book which deals with the wars of conquest and revenge and attrition in the West—Navaho warfare in the Southwest, wars with the Cheyennes and Comanches, the Minnesota massacre and the Sioux Wars. Also included is material on the Modoc War, the Ute War, and the Nez Perce and Geronimo wars. The first part of the book covers Indian wars from 1492 until the Cherokees were moved to present-day Oklahoma. The book is well written. The layout of pictorial material is excellent.

STERN-WHEELERS

"A river lives, assumes qualities of its own, and stamps these qualities upon the region through which it flows. Each steamboat, however small, takes on human characteristics until it achieves a personality of its own." With these words Randall V. Mills began his introduction in 1947 to his book *Stern-Wheelers Up Columbia*. Now, more than 30 years later, these same words and the same introduction appear in a University of Nebraska Bison Book reprint of Prof. Mills' work (Univ. of Nebraska, 901 N. 17th St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588, $3.75 paper, $10.95 cloth). This effort looks at the riverboats on the Columbia River from early in the 19th century up through the late 1940s. Mills said his study looked at "what they were, where and when they went, what they did, and why they did it." Good times and bad times on the river are related in this 212-page book which includes illustrations. And Mills includes an appendix listing the steamboats driven by paddles that operated on the Columbia River System and on the coastal rivers and inland lakes of Oregon plus the steamers used on the rivers. The name, type, where and when built, tons, length and disposition date are included.

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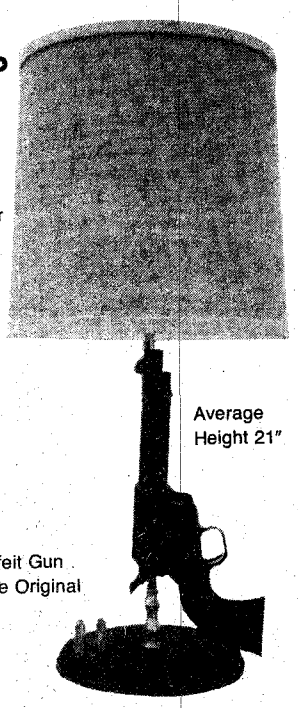

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en, festive events, historic or patriotic themes, images of masculinity and pictures of the brewery itself are represented in this interesting collection. The posters can easily be removed to be used as wall decorations. The author is a collector of brewery artifacts and founder and president of the Eastern Coast Breweriana Association. Old-timers will find special interest in this unique collection.

BATTLE OF MINE CREEK

As most students of Civil War history know, the Battle of Mine Creek, October 25, 1864, was the only Civil War battle fought in Kansas between uniformed troops. It involved large forces of both Union and Confederate cavalry. *The Battle of Mine Creek* by Lumir F. Buresh (Lowell Press, P. O. Box 1877, Kansas City, Missouri 64141, $12.95) is a comprehensive account of this important battle that included one of the most spectacular and successful cavalry charges of the war. As Buresh writes: "The cavalry charge at Mine Creek ranks alongside the cavalry charges at Brandy Station and at Gettysburg. In impetuosity, sheer audacity and gallantry, the Union charge at Mine Creek equals that of the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in the Crimean War ten years before." In 265 pages Buresh details the battle story in words, maps, photos, charts and illustrations. There are ten chapters plus six appendices, bibliography and index. The book was edited by Dan L. Smith. Recommended.

Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 61)

Hattabough

My great-grandfather Isaac Jump Hattabough, his wife Methilabel Jane and six sons and one daughter came out to California by way of Indiana over the Overland Trail in 1849 to pan gold and because of ill health. He was made captain of part of the wagontrain because he was a devout Methodist and wouldn't travel on Sundays.

They lived for a while in Caloma, Sacramento, Placerville and Cold Springs, then went on to Santa Clara Valley in 1850. In June of that year he took 174 acres of land to grow the first wheat in the valley west of San Jose. He was also the inventor of the "Hattabough Eagle Fork" and the "Gopher Trap" and was one of the first building contractors in San Jose.

He remarried when he lost his wife in 1888. He belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church, Volunteers of America, and the California and Santa Clara County Pioneers Societies. His name is on a boulder in southern Idaho on the Overland Trail. His granddaughter, Nina E. Stamps, is my aunt and lives in San Jose.

My grandfather Franklin P. Hattabough and grandmother Ida lived in San Jose as long as I can remember.

If there are any relatives in Indiana or California I would like to hear from them.—Florence L. Williams Wing, P. O. Box 712, Sonora, California 95370

Speake

My father, William Harve Speake was born in 1869 and died in 1937. He came to Montague County, Texas in the early 1890s. I would like to find out where he came from or where he was born. Any information about my father will be appreciated.—R. D. Speake, 812 Adkins Street, Bowie, Texas 76230

Ashton

I would like to get in touch with Faye Ashton who used to live in Bristow, Oklahoma and was familiar with the local history of Bristow and nearby Sapulpa, Oklahoma.

Faye had a very young son when I visited them during the late fifties and he probably doesn't remember me but I'm sure Faye does. They may have moved from Oklahoma and may be living in the Sacramento or Fresno, California area.

As a writer and illustrator for Foxfire Press, I would like to hear from Faye or her daughter Betty Jo,—Carl Darden, c/o Eliot Wigginton, Editor and President, Foxfire Fund, Inc., Rabun Nacoochie School, Rabun Gap, Georgia 30568

Carson-Beshears

I need information on Samuel T. Carson's ancestry. He was probably born in Georgia about 1850. He moved to Texas where his nine children were born. They were John; Arvel (my grandfather); Sam; Archie; Jim and Thad (twins); Tine, Vennie (Now Mrs. Scott); Nanny (now Mrs. Harris).

Arvel was born in 1888 in Texas and died in Sumerton, Arizona in 1954. He married Eula Mae Beshears. She was born in Texas in 1889 and died in Sumerton in 1939. She was the daughter of Carter and Clara Bell Beshears, birthdates and places unknown. Carter and Clara Beshears also had three other children: Ulysses (Eulis), Opal, and J. W. —Randy Carson, 837 Oleander Avenue, El Centro, California 92243

Garrett-Davidson-Frawner-Ogle

I am trying to find anyone who would know anything about my great-grandfather's parents. My great-grandfather's name was Elias Reasen Garrett. He was married to Laura Ellen Frawner who was supposedly a Cherokee Indian from either Kansas or Oklahoma. I have heard that my great-great-grandfather was married to a woman from England, Margaret Jane Davidson. His name was also Elias Garrett. Someone said he was also married to a woman with the last name of Ogle at one time. His children's names were Elias, William Henry, George Joseph and Mary and there was one more son whose name I do not know.

I would appreciate hearing from anyone who might know of any of the descendants of this family. They originally came from Howard and Olathe, Kansas. I will return postage on all letters I receive.—Julia (Garrett) Ditmore, Box 264, Ulysses, Kansas 67880

Hollyfield

I am most interested in learning something about my father whom I never met. I know almost nothing about him except his name, Claude Hollyfield. He and my mother, Pearlee Moses, were married in the state of Oklahoma in 1927. I was born in Devol, Oklahoma, September 30, 1928. My father evidently disappeared shortly thereafter and was said to have been killed in Seminole, Oklahoma. However, there is no death certificate for him on file and a family rumor had him alive and well after W.W. II. I believe he came from Texas or Kansas and must have been born around 1908. I would like to know more about him and his family. Hollyfield isn't a common name and I've only come across it a time or two over the years.—J. L. Hollyfield, 2434 Crooked Finger Rd., N. E., Scotts Mills, Oregon 97375

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46—Mad Cow, 12x8
47—Wagons Westward, 13½x9¼
48—The Challenge, 10½x6¼
49—When Arrows Spell Death, 9x7
50—Old Fashioned Stage Coach, 10x7
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52—Prospectors, 10¼x8
53—Planning the Attack, 14x10
54—Pipe of Peace, 14x7
55—Who Killed the Bear?, 10½x7
56—Queen's War Hounds, 14x9¼
57—Rainy Morning in a Cow Camp, 11x8½
58—Roping a Grizzly, 11x8¼
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60—Roping a Wolf, 11x8¼
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81—Last of 5,000, 8x9¼
82—When Tracks Spell Meat, 13¼x9¼
83—When the Nose of a Horse Beats the Eyes of a Man, 13½x9¼
84—When Ignorance is Bliss, 11x14
85—Wild Horse Hunters (cowboys), 14x9
86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 12½x8
87—Whose Meat?, 13½x9¼
88—Wagon Boss, 16x9¼
89—When Mules Wear Diamonds, 13½x9½
90—A Crow Chief, 7x9
91—Innocent Allies, 14x9½
92—Where Ignorance is Bliss, 10½x6 (Cartoon)
93—When Sioux & Blackfeet Meet, 15x8¼
94—Warning Shadows, 10½x7
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96—Wound Up, 11x8¼
97—The Scouts (Indians) 9½x7
98—Winter Packet, 15x7
99—Mourning Her Warrior Dead, 11x8¼
100—When Horses Turn Back There's Danger Ahead, 14x9½
101—The Buffalo Hunt (1898), 13½x9½
102—Cowboy Sport, 13½x9¼
103—A Desperate Stand, 13¼x9½
104—Rider of the Rough String, 13½x9½
105—Prairie Express, 13½x9¼
106—The Fire Boat, 10¼x8
107—Our Warriors Return, 13¼x9¼
108—When Wagon Trails Were Dim, 13½x9¼
109—In Without Knocking, 14x10
110—Critical Moment, 8x6
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